

NAMDHARI SIKHS

A BRIEF HISTORY



Tara Singh Anjaan



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GURU-SIKH TRADITION

The Namdhari Sikhs are followers of Satguru. The relation of Master-the Guru and disciple-the Sikh is as old as process of teaching and learning. The urge to learn has existed in man since time immemorial. So, to acquire knowledge and wisdom, he comes to the fold of the Master. Sikh word itself is the changed form of Shishya from *Sanskrit*, *Pali*, *Apbhransh* and *Prakrit* languages of Indian origin.

The word Sikh is related with Sikh religion. Infact, Sikh religion is a set of commandments of *Maryada*- a code of conduct-evolved and preached by Guru Nanak Dev Ji and his successors. This has a glorious history dating back to five centuries. The Gurus' religious scriptures were compiled by fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev. This holy Granth is Guru's Bani and is known as Sri Adi Granth Sahib. Second scripture was the creation of Tenth Guru Gobind Singh. It is known as Dasam Granth. The Holy poetic flow of these *Banis* is recited, sung, read, contemplated and followed with utmost sanctity, reverence, honour and purity. The Namdhari Sikhs are commanded by Satguru to follow the code of conduct based on *Bani*.

According to *Bani* all powerful Lord had been appearing in human form time to time so as to guide and bless the errant beings for virtuous living. This tradition has continued for four ages called Yugas: Satyug, Treta, Dwapar and Kalyug and is in continuation. The appearance of Sikh Gurus manifested the same tradition:

In the Satya-Yuga it was performed (by Him)
Bali was deceived (by Him) by becoming a award.

In the Treta-Yuga it was performed
 (He was) called Ram of the Raghu family.
 In the Dvapara yuga Krishan,
 Murari, Kans was served (by Him)
 To Ugrasen the kingdom was given,
 security to the devotees
 In the Kalyuga Guru Nanak is the authority,
 he is (also) called Angad (and) Amar.

-Sri Adi Granth Sahib

The kingdom of the holy Guru is immovable (and)
 permanent, by the primeval divine made it is ordered.

ਸਤਜੁਗ ਤੈ ਮਾਣਿਓ ਛਲਿਓ ਬਲਿ ਬਾਵਨ ਭਾਇਓ।।
 ਤ੍ਰੇਤੈ ਤੈ ਮਾਣਿਓ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਘੁਵੰਸ ਕਹਾਇਓ।।
 ਦੁਆਪਰਿ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਨ ਮੁਰਾਰਿ ਕੰਸੁ ਕਿਰਤਾਰਥੁ ਕੀਓ।।
 ਉਗ੍ਰਸੈਣ ਕਉ ਰਾਜੁ ਅਭੈ ਭਗਤਹ ਜਨ ਦੀਓ।।
 ਕਲਿਜੁਗ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਅੰਗਦੁ ਅਮਰੁ ਕਹਾਇਓ।।
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਜ ਅਬਿਚਲੁ ਅਟਲੁ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖਿ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਓ।।

The aim of this spiritual tradition had been to connect mankind with the Almighty-His Lord and Guru. As per Guru Gobind Singh, a number of *Pirs*, self-proclaimed messengers, demigods/ *DEVI- DEVTAS* had come to this world. Instead of praising Almighty, they professed to be all powerful and hence began to get themselves worshipped as omnipresent, omnipotent and all powerful.

According to Guru Gobind Singh, Guru Nanak Dev's lineage goes back to Raghuvanshi Lord Rama.

We find its reference in Bachittar Natak, a *Bani* of Guru Gobind Singh, that Raghu was the ancestor of Surya clan. His son Aj was the great archer and Aj's son was Dashrath who had four princes. Lord Ram was the eldest. Two princes of Ram were Luv and Kush, who got built Lahore and Kasur cities (Both in Pakistan). Subsequently, The Sodhis and Bedis originated from them. The Sodhis

ruled this area while Bedis went to Kashi (Benaras) and became expert in reciting *Vedas* :

Three *Vedas* you heard and listening

As per *Bachittar Natak*, then Bedi's said:

to the forth one you donated the whole grandeur of earth.

When we complete our three births

He will accept you Guru in the forth one.-*Bichatra Natak*

ਤ੍ਰਿਤਿਯ ਬੇਦ ਸੁਨਬੇ ਤੁਮ ਕੀਆ।।

ਚਤਰ ਬੇਦੁ ਸੁਨਿ ਭੂਅ ਕੇ ਦੀਆ।।

ਤੀਨ ਜਨਮ ਹਮਾਹੂੰ ਜਬ ਧਰਿਹ।।

ਚੌਥੇ ਜਨਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਹਿ ਕਰਿ ਹੈ।।

On the invitation of a Sodhi emperor, Bedis came to *Madar* (Punjab) country. They recited three *Vedas* viz. *Rigved*, *Samveda* and *Yajurveda* meticulously for the Sodhi emperor. When fourth *Veda*, *Atharva veda*, was recited, he got so impressed that he gave away the kingdom to them. Sodhi emperor went out to Benaras. However, before his departure the Sodhi emperor forecasted that Nanak as the saviour would appear in the Kalyug: Nanak Rai would take birth in the families of these Bedi's. He would take care of his Sikhs where ever they shall be.

ਤਿਨ ਬੇਦੀਯਨ ਕੀ ਕੁਲ ਬਿਖੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਇ।।

ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕੇ ਸੁਖ ਦਏ ਜਹ ਤਹ ਭਏ ਸਹਾਇ।।

Guru Nanak Dev realised in his life time (1469 to 1539) that man had given up his obligations and spiritual values. A king did not perform his duties and people were ignorant, they were blind without knowledge. Those who could awaken the public had either become yes-men of rulers or had gone to mountains for meditation. Their perspective was escapism. And those who stayed back in the society and called themselves pundits were deceits:

aped their rulers in terms of dress (blue) and behaviour: read the scriptures of foreigners and accepted ill-gotten money (ਧਾਨ) for rendering such services.

Blue cloth were put on and worn, the Turk Pathan's excercised

ਨੀਲ ਬਸਤਰ ਲੇ ਕਪੜੇ ਪਹਿਰੇ।

ਤੁਰਕ ਪਠਾਣੀ ਅਮਲੁ ਕੀਆ।।

ਮਹਲਾ 1

ਨੀਲ ਬਸਤ੍ਰ ਪਹਿਰਿ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ।।

ਮਲੇਛ ਧਾਨ ਲੇ ਪੂਜਹਿ ਪੁਰਾਣੁ।।

ਮਹਲਾ 1

Guru Nank Dev carried out religious pilgrimages (*Udasis*) to guide people of this earth. He composed and recited *Gurbani*. He performed deep meditation and preached *Naam-Simran*-meditation, *Bani* recitation and sharing wealth-*Vand Chhakna*. He highlighted the relevance of family life. Guru Nank Dev Ji imparted wisdom to the ignorant people. He had exchanged dialogues with philosophers. He raised voice against the tyrant rulers who oppressed the poor. He preached man to eat pure vegetarian food and lead simple living in order to keep his personal life with high morals. He prohibited eating meat, fish etc. He forbade drinking liquor and using other toxics. He taught rightful earning instead of sinful, wicked, immoral and errant earnings. He preached and propagated about respecting women in society, rise above caste- system, and be kind to the poor. He preached the greatness of Guru and praise to *Akal-Purakh*-Almighty. He wrote in *Bani*....

I am committed to the true Guru,

by meeting whom the Lord is kept in the mind

By whom, by means of (His) instruction,

the collyricum of divine is given,

(so that) by these (my) eyes the world is beheld.

Mahalla 1

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਵਿਟਹੁ ਵਾਰਿਆ ਜਿਤੁ ਮਿਲਿਐ ਖਸਮੁ ਸਮਾਲਿਆ।।
 ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰਿ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਗਿਆਨ ਅੰਜਨੁ ਦੀਆ
 ਇਨੀ ਨੇਤ੍ਰੀ ਜਗਤੁ ਨਿਹਾਲਿਆ। ਮਹਲਾ 1

Satguru's grace must always be on Sikhs, keeping this need in mind and according to :

Only capable can sit on throne
 ਤਖਤਿ ਬਹੈ ਤਖਤੈ ਕੀ ਲਾਇਕ।। ਮਹਲਾ 1

He (Guru Nanak Dev enthroned Bhai Lehna as his successor and left for his heavenly abode. Bhai Lehna (Guru Angad Dev) in turn handed over *Gurgaddi* (spiritual kingdom) to Guru Amardas. Guru Amardas considered Bhai Jetha as the ablest among *sangat* and (Bhai Jetha) was enthroned to the authority of Sikh religion and his name became Guru Ramdas Ji. From here onward, this seat came into Sodhi clan.

During this time two parallel seats of spiritual and temporal power were continuing: Baba's (Guru Sahiban) and Babar's i.e., Mughal empire. Satguru's *gaddi* propagated spiritual greatness, human values, social reforms and strengthening of virtuous values among Sikhs. Whereas the Mughals enforced political supremacy. Although Emperor Akbar showed respect to Guru's *langar* (community kitchen) yet religious authority was rankling the state power. This smoulder feeling was lit up during the time of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

After being coronated as fifth Guru, he created historical memorials and compiled *Bani* of *Saints*, *Bhagats*, *Gur Sikhs* and *Bhats* along with the *Bani* of *Satguru Sahiban*, and edited it in the form of Holy Book called by the disciples as *Sri Adi Granth Sahib*. The same is written as *Pothi Sahib*, *Soochi Prati*, *Giranth Ji*, *Granth Ji*, *Granth Sahib* by different writers. Devotees worship it as *Guru Granth Sahib* also.

Emperor Jahangir arrested Guru Arjan Dev because of his growing impact of power till his time and his courtiers poisoned his ears. On his orders Guru Arjan Dev was tortured, made to sit on hot iron plate, hot sand was poured on his head and he sacrificed his life in 1606.

The next Guru of Sikh panth, Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji wore two swords, one of Miri and the other of Piri (symbolising religion and politics). He maintained army and adopted life style of warriors. The valiant Guru, brought gallantry and spirituality together.

The preaching of Sikh faith was slow during the time of Sikh *panth's* seventh and eighth preceptors-Guru Har Rai Ji and Guru Harikrishan Ji ; but during the reign of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, there was again a clash of Satguru's tolerance and Aurangzeb's tyranny. Sri Satguru Ji sacrificed his life along with many of his disciples to save the Hindu religion.

As soon as (Guru) Teg Bahadur left.
this world became full of grief.
Cries of distress were heard all around
whereas in the heavens
resounded ovation and applause.

-Bachittar Natak

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਕੇ ਚਲਤ ਭਯੋ ਜਗਤ ਕੇ ਸੋਕ
ਹੈ ਹੈ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਭਯੋ ਜੈ ਜੈ ਜੈ ਸੁਰ ਲੋਕ॥

Guru Gobind Singh was enthroned on the *Gaddi*. He was the tenth guru. He had to fight many wars in his time in which Hindus, Muslims equally fought bravely from his side. He composed *Bani* at Paonta Sahib, which was in *Brij*, *Punjabi* and Persian languages. To create newer recognition of Sikhs, he created *Khalsa Panth* on Baisakhi-30-March-1699. Guru Gobind Singh asked *Khalsa* to stand up for righteousness, against repression and tyranny, not to discriminate between human beings and

to meditate upon God's Name. His four sons- Sahibzadas Ajit Singh, Jujhar Singh, Jorawar Singh and Fateh Singh sacrificed their lives for the sake of religion and justice. To exterminate tyrant ruler, he himself went to far off place Nander (Maharashtra). From there too, he disappeared in 1708 and spent long time in Rajasthan and Punjab in disguise. There after handing over spiritual throne (*Gurgaddi*) to Guru Balak Singh, he left for his heavenly abode in 1812 AD. The reference to this disguised life is obtained from the writings of Sikh historians viz. Kavi Sukha Singh (*Guru Bilas*), Bhai Santokh Singh (*Guru Pratap Suraj*), Giani Gian Singh (*Sri Guru Panth Prakash*), Mahant Sumer Singh (*Guru Bilas*), Kavi Sainapati (*Guru Sobha*), Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha (*Itihas de Anlikhei Patrey*).

Guru Gobind Singh told Guru Balak Singh while handing over *Gurgaddi*, that "I, would take it back at next change of re-embodiment."

Nevertheless the Tenth Master appeared in person and informed him: Ram Singh is my incarnation partaking of an element of mine.

I have, therefore, entrusted him and none else with my authority. The master's message was clear and firm.

ਐਧੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਸਮ ਦਰਸ ਦੈ ਜੇ ਕਹਯੋ ਤਾਂਹਿ
ਮੇਰੇ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਅੰਸ ਰਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੈ ਭਰੇ।
ਯਾਹਿ ਹੇਤ ਤਾਂਹਿ ਨਾਂਹਿ ਔਰ ਕਾਂਹਿ ਮਾਂਹਿ
ਨਿਜ ਸ਼ਕਤਿ ਰਖਾਇ ਗੁਰਵਾਕ ਦਿਛੁ ਥੇ ਧਰੇ।

-Sri Guru Panth Prakash- Giani Gian Singh

The Guru whose identification is depicted in Gurbani has been praised as embodied Guru. Tenth Guru, like earlier Gurus, blessed Guru Balak Singh as his successor. Namdhari Sikhs are torch bearers of this Guru-Sikh tradition. They follow their Satguru; feel blessed by being in his order.

TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

The tenth Master-Guru Gobind Singh went into hiding on his own discretion for political strategy. He gave a new life to ascetic, sage Madho Das by advising him to stand against tyranny and repression. Madho Das is also called as Banda Bahadur who fought valiantly. He squared account of execution of Sahibzadas with Nawab Sarhind and bumped him off. He laid the foundation of Sikh empire in Punjab and issued the coins in the name of Guru Nanak; but Mughal Emperor Farrukhsiyar sent big army, which followed Banda Bahadur and Sikh army away, kept them besieged in Gurdas Nangal fortress for 8 months. Shackled Banda Bahadur heavily chained with 740 starving companions was driven to Delhi where they, after severe torture, were executed in 1716.

Even after that, Lahore's Subedar Zakria Khan became extreme enemy of Sikhs. Sometimes Afghan invaders, Abdali and Nadirshah trampled Punjab and wished to eliminate the Sikhs who indulged in guerrilla warfare with them. Sikhs started living in forests on the horses' saddle so that they could respond quickly and be safe in contingency. During this very time-big holocausts also occurred.

Punjab kept on getting weak because of Afghan invaders. Anarchy prevailed in the province. Mughal power went on losing its hold. While standing up to tyranny and repression, Sikhs organised themselves into a strong army. First they emerged as 12 armed groups-Misals. By 1799 Maharaja Ranjit Singh as a Sikh ruler took over the

reigns of Sikh empire and formed a mighty Sikh army. Maharaja Ranjit Singh recruited in 1837 Guru Ram Singh Ji in his army. He was in the Kanwar Naunihal Singh unit.

With the rise of political power of Sikhs in Punjab, their virtuous decline started. Appearance of Sikhs was intact up to some extent, but Sikhs kept on forgetting theological principles and rituals i.e. code of conduct of Sikhism. None was there to guide them towards contemplation of Naam and teach Punjabi that is why even those who had Sri Adi Granth Sahib and Sri Dasam Granth Sahib (holy sikh scriptures) were unable to read them. So these scriptures were just stored in the almirahas and niches. These were being eaten upto by either termites or rats. Mahants, Priests, Sodhis, Bedis, Bawas etc. were getting themselves worshipped. None would offer good advice to ordinary Sikhs. In the centres of religion, inebriate, lecherous, adulterer, hypocrites and cheats were misguiding people. Giani Gian Singh, a renowned Sikh historian, has written about it in *Sri Guru Panth Prakash* :

They started eating meat and drinking liquor; started eating poppy, opium, cannabis. They disrespected kesh (hair), indulged in petty crimes, stealing. But Sri Satguru Balak Singh Ji saved Sikhism through his preachings and dignity of meditation. He preached in Hazron region to Sikhs. He was commanded to stroll more in hiding, by Guru Gobind Singh while handing over *Gurgaddi* to him; after returning back in 12th re-embodiment.

With the demise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839, the throne of Sikh kingdom was on shaky ground. Due to treachery of Dogras and their burning desire to be the rulers of Punjab, kings, queens, princes, courtiers and ministers were continuously murdered. Among them Chet Singh Bajwa, Maharaja Kharak Singh, Naunihal Singh,

Maharani Chand Kaur, Maharaja Sher Singh, Kanwar Partap Singh, Kanwar Pishora Singh, Kanwar Tara Singh, Kanwar Kashmira Singh, and Dhyani Singh Dogra himself, his brother Suchet Singh, son Hira Singh, Sandhawalia Sardars etc. were put to death. Anarchy prevailed all over. Internal factionalism, hooliganism kept on spreading. According to the data available, 36 emperors, kings, prime ministers, empresses were killed. And finally in 1849 the Sikh kingdom was galloped by British pretending to be saviours but acted as crocodile. Minor Prince Dalip Singh was enthroned only by name.

In 1841 army marched towards Peshawar to collect government treasure, Satguru Ram Singh Ji also accompanied the unit. The army brought the treasure up to banks of Attock river. People of that region were saved from excessive losses. They had believed it as the grace of Guru Balak Singh Ji.

It is right from here that Guru Ram Singh Ji and 25 other soldiers reached Hazron to have a darshan-pious look of Guru Balak Singh Ji. As soon as he looked at Sri Satguru Ram Singh, by clairvoyance (he) recognised him as 12th incarnation. He gave him 5 paise and coconut. While handing over *Gurgaddi* said the following words, "Thakar Ji ! take care of your safe deposit, set right the condition of *panth*, and spread the sunny rays of *Naam Simran* and meditation.

Sri Satguru Ji came back to Lahore along with army. Hooliganism and family-killing policy in Sikh kingdom made Guru Ram Singh Ji uneasy. He left the army in 1845 and returned to Sri Bhaini Sahib (Dist. Ludhiana). He began doing meditation and contemplation. At that time he was about 29 years old. (Born 1816 to father Jassa Singh and mother Sada Kaur at village Raiyan district Ludhiana.

He lived together with parents, wife Mata Jassan, daughters Bibi Nandan, and Daya Kaur and family of younger brother Budh Singh. He opened a shop for honest earning. After taking bath from head to toe, he would go to Akal Bunga, outside village, before dawn and engrossed in contemplation of God for hours together.

Patriotism nudged his thinking to find reasons of fall of Sikh rule; because Sikh kingdom was founded in 1799 and in the same year East India Company of Britishers had established itself in Bengal. Though the Britishers came as merchants, but soon became rulers. The first ship of British Company with William Howkins as its Captain docked on west coast of India at Surat 24 August 1600. In the court of Jahangir, ambassador Sir Thomas Row sought permission of emperor, to build a palace which was subsequently built after 4 years. In the time to come, with due permission of the emperor, company commenced trading in Bengal and expansion towards Hyderabad, Bombay and launched its own currency.

With prudence, cunningness and policy of divide and rule, the Britishers noticed the weakening Mughal Empire, they started capturing provinces. None could even stand up to their military power. They tried to annex Punjab also, but out of necessity signed a treaty with Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1809, but later on broke that treaty too and captured Punjab; got Sikhs to surrender arms and made the once powerful people yes-men by awarding them with estates.

Meanwhile, the Christian missionaries established their headquarters in 1834 at Ludhiana and started converting the native and superstitious people to Christianity.

By virtue of his experience and contemplation, Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji comprehended British cunningness.

Sri Satguru Ji knew that armed war can not be fought; but at the sametime he could not quietly watch the dwindling Sikh kingdom. He revived the Sikh code (*Maryada*) prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. On 12-April-1857 He founded *Namdhari Panth* by administering the nectar/ *amrit* of *Khanda-Bata* to 5 Pyaras (beloved). He unfurled triangular white flag of freedom movement against the British rule. He commanded Sikhs to get up before dawn, have bath from head to toe, meditate on *Naam* and read the Holy Scriptures. For the betterment of women, to tackle web of evil practices widespread in the society, he prohibited killing, selling girls, *Vatta* (marrying bride's brother to bridegroom's sister), dowry etc. He permitted widow marriage.

According to political programme, he boycotted British institutions and goods. He preached complete boycott of foreign cloth, courts, postal system, education, service etc; and started the movement of non-cooperation and led the people on the path of *Swadeshi*. It is written in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* that

"(Guru) Ram Singh-Sikh philosopher and reformer and the first Indian to use non-cooperation and boycott of the British merchandise and services as a political weapon."

Satguru Ram Singh's initiative for independence had reorganised the patriots; and filled in a new spirit in them.

ORGANISATION OF NAMDHARI PANTH

As noted earlier Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji established *Namdhari Panth* on 12-April-1857 at Sri Bhaini Sahib, Punjab. In the same year on 10*May, rebellion broke out in Meerut army against East India Company. This rebellion spread like a fire in Indus-Ganga plains, Rajputana, Central India and Bengal. Its causes were usage of animal including cow fat in cartridges, denying royal rights to chiefs of some provinces and hatred against company government and Christianity. Initially mutineers met with success, Bahadur Shah Zafar got power on the throne of Delhi again, but the British crushed this revolt. Tanya Tope, Nana Faranvees, Rani Jhansi all lost in the struggle against Company rule. Many were killed and Bahadur Shah Zafar was exiled to Rangoon (Burma) as a state prisoner.

Indian historians called this rebellion as first war of independence. Lack of organisation and army of Punjab and some other places and provinces staying loyal to British were the causes of its defeat. After this, Indian administration was brought directly under British government. Company's rule was over.

Since Sri Satguru Ji was himself in the army, so he thought of a political perspective too in the new context. He started tours to associate lay man with his political movement of non-cooperation and indigenouness. He had realised that countrymen did not have enough willpower

They had become weak on spiritual front. The Punjabis had already been incapacitated. Satguru Ji undertook tours. Wherever he would go, he preached people to meditate on *Naam*, read holy scriptures, respect women, maintain purity and chastity and become self dependent. He exhorted the people to follow discipline preached by Guru Gobind Singh. He gave the people rosary to count ones beads of *Naam*. He would go to each village; accompanied by *Keertani Jatha* (Gurbani reciters).

The people flocked to Sri Bhaini Sahib on hearing about Sri Satguru Ji. They were keen to know the nature of Guru's propagation. After getting impressed by Satguru Ji, they became his disciples. Bishanpura's landlord Mangal Singh was among them, who presented him very expensive white mare. Satguru Ji was called as *Chini Wale Patshah*, as he rode on the white mare.

Baba Jawahar Singh Nirmala saint, Udasi saint Sahib Singh (Bangalipur) and scholar Rai Singh (Madeehar) also visited Bhaini Sahib for *Naam-Simran*. As a result, Bhaini Sahib emerged a centre of meditation.

Sri Satguru Ji started tour of Muthada village of Jalandhar district and baptised village after village to become Namdhari Sikhs. They became saints from debauchees. At many places, his followers demolished graves, so called places of Goddess and told them that there was nothing to be worshipped. These graves, places of *pirs*, goddess, *Khangah* created superstitions.

Sri Satguru Ji went to Haridwar along with his disciples in 1861 on the festival of Ardh-Kumbhi (to the bath in the holy Ganga water after every six years). There also Satguru Ji denounced the superstitions and preached to help the needy people. He advised the false *mahants*, naked Saints, *Nirmale* scholars, *Vedantis* and public in

general to be on the righteous path. In his discourses, he praised spirituality and made disciples.

At Hardwar *sangat* could not pick up burning heavy timber beam. Satguru Ji himself and his younger brother Budh Singh picked it up from either sides and put off the fire by throwing it into the *Ganga* river. Here he made Sahib Kaur with her son sit on burning pyre, and by his spiritual power did not let the heat to affect them. Satguru Ji celebrated Diwali of 1862 at Amritsar preached to be true Sikh and toured Majha- central part of Punjab. Satguru Ji received the news that Guru Balak Singh had left for his heavenly abode on 6-December-1862. However, Instead of going to Hazron, he preached Sikhism in the areas of Shahbad, Wazirabad, Sialkot, Naushahara etc.

By this time, government had come to know about his growing influence over the people. The Deputy Commissioners and Deputy Superintendents of Police of districts of Punjab were sending reports about this development to Inspector General Police of Punjab state which were forwarded to higher authorities.

According to the report of 12-June-1863 of Attock, 6 months back after death of Guru Balak Singh, the Sikhs of new sect had unanimously accepted Guru Ram Singh as the successor of Guru Balak Singh. Deputy Commissioner -Sialkot wrote that he had 5000 Sikhs there, who did not accept anyone else as ruler. According to Deputy Commissioner of Jalandhar, the Namdhari Sikhs were worshippers of embodied guru; got inspiration from Sri Adi Granth Sahib, tied round turban and wear woollen rosary. So as per reports, Government was not only gathering information about Sri Satguru Ji and his followers but also watching their activities closely.

The impact of Sri Satguru Ji's tours went on

mounting. On the full moon day of Jeth (name of an Indian month) in 1863, on 1 June, he took another revolutionary step for betterment of women. He graced with his visit village Siar (district Ludhiana), and baptised women by administering *amrit* and nominated them adherents of purity and chastity and *Rahit Maryada*. For the first time, women were administered with *amrit* of *Khanda-Bata*. The tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh had administered *amrit* to men only. Here itself, irrespective of other aspects, sermons were preached forbidding girl killing, Vatta, child marriage and dowry. Satguru Ji prohibited grave worship, to put on amulet, veil. Everybody nodded in affirmative.

Launching of Anand Maryada

Sri Satguru Ji chalked out a program to launch a new marriage custom to liberate people from Hindu priests (Pundits), menial workers, for customary payments and old, complex, costly rituals of marriage. This marriage custom was launched from village Khote, district Ferozepur (now Moga) on 3-June-1863. Here as per the command of Satguru Ji, after *Asa-di-Vaar* recital, in the altar (*Vedi*) around the perimeter of fire pit, (four) circumambulation of 6 couples were performed by reciting *lavan* from Sri Adi Granth and administering *amrit* after they had taken bath from head to toe. These were inter-caste marriages, dowry less, first of its kind in Sikh religion. On the basis of this historical evidence Government of India passed Anand Marriage Act in 1909.

The Hindu priests and menial workers could not force anything, but they registered a complaint at Bagha Purana police station through village watchman that Satguru Ji was accompanied by 500 disciples. He was doing revolutionary propaganda. The Government machinery came into action. Satguru Ji was sent to Sri

Bhaini Sahib from police station to police station and placed under house arrest. The Deputy Commissioner-Ludhiana informed Secretary Punjab about this development on 6-July-1863. The Government had also got the report that 40,000 *Kukas* (Namdhari) would reach Amritsar on Diwali 1863 and rebel against the government.

Appointing Subas

He had chalked out a strategic plan for meditation and, contemplation. Firstly, he wrote code of conduct concerned with Sikh religious *Rahit Maryada*. Secondly, for organised preaching he designated 5 Subas viz. Baba Jawahar Singh, Kahan Singh Nihang, Sahib Singh, Sudh Singh and Lakha Singh. Following his instructions they started preaching about Namdhari Panth. The government apprehended a threat to its rule. So these 5 Subas were also put under house arrest at Sri Bhaini Sahib. Satguru Ji designated 17 more Subas. Their personality was also effective. According to Satguru Ji they were pure and clean with thoughts, words, and deeds. Their tone had magnetic power. Their background was loaded with experiences. They were former administrative personnel, *Nirmala* and *Vedanti* scholars, well of agriculturists and followers of Satguru' Balak Singh.

Suba Sahib Singh was incharge of postal services, trade and developing foreign relations. The task of preaching religion was assigned to other Subas. Bibi Hukmi was appointed as Suba for the awakening of women. These Subas were representatives of Sri Satguru Ji. But British rulers put them under house arrest, a few in Sri Bhaini Sahib and the rest in their own villages.

The Commissioner of Ambala circle himself came and told Satguru Ji by referring to government power that they had put all Subas too under house arrest, what

would he do? Satguru Ji said with great patience, but firmness "Now I'll create Ram Singh in each and every house." The Commissioner returned greatly disappointed.

Despite atrocities, house arrests of Satguru Ji and Subas, the strength and fragrance of *Kukas* spread for and near. They were blossoming like Lillies. As per the estimates of rulers, Namdharis had reached the count of 300,000 by 1866. On 2-Feb-1867, Secretary Punjab government forwarded the reports received from districts about growth of *Namdhari Panth* to Foreign Secretary, India and attached list of 252 Namdhari leaders in 14 districts/ provinces. But government could not find firm ground to fix Satguru Ji and relaxed house arrest by the end of 1866.

As per chalked out programme, on 6-Feb-1867 Satguru Ji sent Suba Lakha Singh to inform the government that they were going to Anandpur Sahib on *Hola*. In case the government did not allow and the *sangat* would come here in large numbers, then it will be the responsibility of government. Commissioner, DC, DSP etc. came to Sri Bhaini Sahib to assess the situation and were forced out of compulsion to permit to go to Anandpur Sahib. Urdu newspaper *Raih-Noo-Mai-Punjab* (Sialkot) had written in 18-Feb 1867 issue about Namdharis shouting against government laws and they aimed at the revival of Sikh empire. It is a matter of wonder and regret that the Punjabis (Namdharis) were again thinking of old *Saltanat* and crying out against the rules of Government.

Satguru Ji reached Anandpur Sahib on 19th-March 1867 on the occasion of *Hola Mohalla* along with *Subas*, Sikhs, and followers. They told DC Hoshiarpur that the reason to visit there was to express reverance at this Sikh holy place and have *darshan* of it. He preached to the *mahants* of gurdwaras to give up meat, liquor, lie,

libidness, and misconduct and insisted to follow *Gur-Maryada*. The Government record shows that the number of Namdhari Sikhs was between five thousand to ten thousand and officers appreciated their discipline under auspicious command of Satguru Ji. Here a lot of people were baptised as new Namdharis.

In the same year, Sikhs reached Amritsar on Diwali, on the instructions of Satguru Ji. As per declaration of Dasam Patshah, it was in the air that this Namdhari carnival was a grave danger for British rule. Here the gathering of Namdhari Sikhs was over 20,000, but well organised. By hearing the praise of Satguru Ji other people also turned up to have *darshan*; and many became his disciples due to his christmatic personality. Satguru Ji went to Harimander Sahib and other gurudwaras along with other disciples. Only the priests and *Nihangs* of *Akal Takhat* doubted that possibly that he would seize hold of Gurudwara. Everybody else at Harimandar Sahib welcomed him. Priest of *Akal Takhat* was displeased with him as he had to nurture loyalty towards the British.

He issued a decree of "not being Sikhs" against Satguru Ram Singh and issued orders that didn't allow him and his followers to enter into gurudwaras. That is why the priests of Nankana Sahib did not behave properly.

It was apprehended in government circles that Suba Sahib Singh could be his successor.

Satguru Ji started his tours again and brought Malwa under the fold of Sikh *Rahit Maryada*. On Maghi (14 January) 1868, he organised a carnival in Muktsar. Priests of gurudwara, did not allow him to pay his respects in gurudwaras and asked him to undergo *Tankhah* (religious punishment). People were perplexed with the behaviour of those priests, but did not do anything diligently.

Sri Satguru Ji had brought Namdhari *Panth* to its full blown youth. Government officers could not confine their (Namdharis) rising spirit in reports. On 27-Oct-1867 Sialkot's officer wrote that 80,000 rosaries were distributed here, it means that as many as 80,000 became *Kukas*. In Gujranwala, the count of *Kukas* was told as 5000.

The government documents of 1867, confirm the existence of Kuka postal service management. It has been written that its letters remain confidential and delivered promptly, after receiving them with great responsibility.

About the respect of Sri Satguru Ji among Sikh *sangat*, Inspector General- Punjab police wrote in 1869 that Sikhs did not consider Guru as an ordinary man, but manifestation of Almighty, re-embodiment of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh. The Sikhs bowed their heads by considering him as a *Satguru Sacha Patshah*.

Seeing the *panth* in rising spirits, atrocities were committed by the British on the Namdhari Sikhs. In February 1869, *Kukas* from district Hissar collected approximately Rupees 5000 by selling their land and began their journey to present that money to Satguru Ram Singh Ji. Due to an altercation with Deputy Inspector near Tharajwala, another police contingent captured them, snatched the money and made them to walk for 65 miles to Muktsar charging them with a suite of revolt. Mastan Singh and other leaders were fined.

Foreign Relations : Kashmir

In Punjab after strengthening the roots of Sikhism and creating anti-government feelings in people's hearts, the Namdhari Sikhs developed their relations outside Punjab. In 1869 during Satguru Ji's tours of Gujranwala and Sialkot districts, he sent Hira Singh Lammu Sadhoura

and Tara Singh Qila Raipur with 28 Sikhs to Maharaja of Kashmir. Maharaja Ranbir Singh recruited them in the army after consultation with his Guru-Vedanti. Due to their honesty, trust and devotion to work and duty, some other Namdhari Sikhs were recruited and a platoon was created and posted at Gilgit border; they would get a salary one rupee higher than other soldiers. These Sikhs were permitted to be in their attire.

Chief Minister of Maharaja, Diwan Kirpa Ram, was a loyal subject of British government. He used to send the reports about Kuka regiment. Due to his reports, Punjab government got it investigated through Deputy Inspector General. All efforts of Diwan were in vain because of faith of Maharaja in Vedanti as well as in loyalty of Namdhari Sikhs. But he kept on trying. In 1871 by poisoning the ears of Maharaja about patriotic and cow-protection activities of Kukas, Diwan got the platoon dismantled.

Nepal :

Nepal's Prime Minister Jang Bahadur could understand British policy to annex India and was sympathetic towards its other patriots. That's why he granted asylum to Punjab's Queen Maharani Jindan, combaters of 1857-Nana Faranvees, Nawab Abdul Majid Khan, Babu Koir Singh and Babu Bandhu Singh etc.

In 1870 Satguru Ji's disciple of Granth Garh, Baba Bishan Singh got closer to a Punjabi hawaldar Nandram. By improving their relations he also met Prime Minister. He told him about the rising power of *Namdhari Panth* and organisation against British. Jang Bahadur Prime Minister perceived the need to meet the leader. Then on the order of Sri Satguru Ji, from his side Suba Sahib Singh and Suba Kahn Singh Nihang met him, and explained in detail about *Maryada*, spirit, policy of non-cooperation and indigenusness of lakhs of Kukas under the banner of Sri

Satguru Ji. They presented two superior quality cattle and two valuable ponies on behalf of Sri Satguru Ji. They revived old memories of Khalsa Raj (because Jang Bahadur and Nihang were both courtiers of Khalsa court). As a special gift, he sent a musk rosary with 108 beads, Tibetan horse, two precious stones, clad Khukhri, valuable shawl and other cloth rupees 500 to Satguru Ji. Baba Bishan Singh stayed there to strengthen the relations.

Once Prime Minister casually praised high character of Namdhari Sikhs to resident colonel RC Lawrence; he became alarmed. He procured more information by his own tricks, exaggerated it and sent report to foreign department of Government of India. By reading it government became alert and made a comment that relations with Kashmir and Nepal are beyond the scope of Guru or religious leader, which means- politics.

Afghanistan-Russia

AAAIn 1867 Sher Ali again became the chief of Afghanistan; He hated British because of wars and battles with British in the past. That's why he was sympathetic towards Indian patriots. Baba Bishan Singh was a scholar of Persian and Pashto. So he furnished necessary information about Namdhari Panth by meeting Amir. His interest in this anti-British class arose and he sent his sons Abdulla and Yakub Khan to India. They visited Sri Bhaini Sahib too and returned impressed with Sri Satguru Ji. British informers sent report about this, but could not write anything about the conversation between them.

Besides Baba Bishan Singh, Baba Gurcharan Singh was also active in foreign mission. They later reached Russia via Samarkand. At the time of Sri Satguru Ji's

detention in Rangoon, he continued to strengthen those relations

Prime Sacrifices for Independence - Amritsar

Sri Satguru Ji had chalked out a programme to unite countrymen together with those having affiliation to the nation. In which, not only Kuka Sikhs, but Kuka Hindus and Kuka Muslims also considered it as good endeavour to engage themselves in this mission. The British were adopting the policy of divide and rule. To divide them religiously, they started cow-slaughter in Punjab on 3 May 1849 Amritsar, at close proximity to Harimander Sahib at the place of clock tower. For Muslims there was no restraint in killing cows, eating, and selling beef. Hindus and Sikhs used to hate it; so, bitterness was creeping in mutual relations. Social and business relations also began to deteriorate. Hindu-Muslim riots also broke out. In 1849, situation became fully tense. In the circumference of Harimandar Sahib, Bhai Dewa Singh saw a cow bone being picked by birds of prey. He placed that bone before Sri Adi Granth Sahib in Harimander Sahib, so that self-esteem of Sikhs could be shaken. The impact was not like that, on the contrary government ordered him 3 years imprisonment for violating peace. Sensing further deteriorating situation, the Commissioner - Ambala division called a meeting of members of city council on 22-May-1871 so that persistence or closure of abattoirs can be decided; and peace normalacy tranquillity can be restored. Although the suggestion of Muslim and Sikh members was to close down them for at least a year, still commissioner got the resolution of persistence approved in the name of religious freedom. On 3-June-1871 by inviting other prominent persons, it was stamped. Muslims got upper hand with it.

For the Sikhs the abattoir adjacent to clock tower

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was to violate the sanctity of their pilgrimage centre. The self esteem of Sikhs of Sri Satguru Ji had aroused. Ten Sikhs resolved to revenge and attacked the abattoir on the night of 14/15 June 1871. The cows were freed, those butchers who came to confront were killed, and cows were released in pastures near gate of Bhagatan wala; after changing blood soaked clothes, went on to different paths.

In this skirmish 4 butchers were killed and 3 injured. Government did utmost efforts, but could not catch Sikhs. To maintain its reputation, by proving 12 innocents as murderers, after awarding the ruling, the Magistrate got Deputy Commissioner's signatures and sent the file to session judge.

One day Baba Lehna Singh and Baba Beehla Singh were sitting before Sri Satguru Ji at Sri Bhaini Sahib. Being asked they disclosed that they had accomplished task. He ordered them to go to district court to speak the truth, admit their crime to save innocents from being hanged.

They located 5 other companions. In court, all seven accepted their action for the sake of religion, poor and destitute and against the crooked policy of government. To complete the *misal* file, a prosecution witness Gulab Singh was called from Ludhiana and after completing the procedure by 11-September-1871 Lehna Singh son of Musadda Singh, Fateh Singh Bhatra, Hakam Singh Patwari and Beehla Singh were awarded death sentence by hanging till death; Lehna Singh son of Blaka Singh, and Lal Singh were awarded *Kala Pani* exile and Mehar Singh, Jhanda Singh, Bhagwan Singh were declared absconding. At the time of execution Martyrs had a head to toe bath in the *Sarovar*, after reading *Bani*, put on the noose on 15-September-1871 from *banyan* tree near *Rambag*. Jhanda Singh Thatta who was arrested on 11-Aug-1873 was executed the following day. That's how these Sikhs

made prime sacrifices for the independence of nation and against British policy.

Baganwala Case :

Government got an abattoir opened at Shimla. Cows were sent from Ambala for slaughtering there. Atar Singh Hazuria, Atar Singh Kotheka, Kahn Singh Kamalpurka, Dhaunkal Singh Raipur and Thamman Singh Dugri resolved to shut down the abattoir. They managed swords also; but when they reached Baganwala near Morinda there were heavy floods in river due to heavy rains. They were about to return when watchman Karambaksh tried to take them to police station but was killed. A mob chased the Sikhs, but returned out of fear that they (Sikhs) may cut them to pieces. Sikhs vanished like air. This incident happened on 5-July-1871. Although some actions regarding this were taken in Morinda case, but government could clearly see the growing sentiments against it among Namdhari Sikhs that the Namdhari Sikhs were not affraid of British rule..

Raikot

Raikot's abattoir was intentionally opened at a place where Guru Gobind Singh Ji had rested. Here gurudwara Tahliana Sahib was built, a pond was also there by its side. Birds would sit in Gurudwara and scrape meat. Once Namdhari Sikhs stayed over night at the place of Suthra's they were told that with the backing of government, butchers were having an upper hand. Our *maryada* got hayway dissolved. These Sikhs went to Tajpur, determined with some resolution and on 15-July-1871, cut the ropes of cows by entering the abattoir at night. A man and a woman were killed, 7 got injured. The owner of abattoir Ranjha and two more escaped by sensing the attack.

It had rained overnight and there was a storm too. So Sikhs disappeared safely. Police of nearby police stations tried to search them out but the hostile weather forced the policemen to go back empty handed.

The following day on 16 July, Deputy Commissioner Ludhiana came to know about it. He visited the site of incident along with Deputy Superintendent of Police. The failure of their policy to divide and desecrate the religion of Hindus and Sikhs was in his mind. Butchers would bring to an end this business. Such activities of the Namdhari Sikhs were not merely to put an end to cow-slaughter but against the British rules. Therefore, immediate action was taken as per his orders. Trackers, hunters followed the footprints and found footprints of 8 individuals going to Nabha state. Then two in one direction and six seemed looked like help in the arrest leading to Chhiniwal in Patiala. Mahinder Singh Maharaja Patiala was asked to get hold of culprits and subsequently he declared a reward of Rs 250/- for the informer who got them arrested or get hold of them. Many gave wrong names out of rankling, greed, and enmity. Harnam Singh said that Guru Ram Singh had got these murders done. A similar statement was given by Sunder Singh out of envy and greed, but the investigating officer, Deputy Superintendent of Police Capt. Haris Ford wrote to Deputy Commissioner L.Cowan that these statements were false and baseless. Sri Satguru Ji had not permitted *Kukas* for any killing.

Dal Singh of Chhiniwal was accomplice in this action. He became prosecution witness for reward of Rs. 1000 which was in addition to the reward by Patiala state. On his information, Gulab Singh from Chuharchak and Mangal Singh, Gurmukh Singh and Mastan Singh were arrested from their village Pithon.

The Court was held at Bassian. Dal Singh, his wife Ramo and Kanha became eye witnesses and after the verdict of lower court, session court judge JW Macnabb sentenced them to death on 27-July-1871; on 1-Aug, Supreme Court confirmed the death sentence.

Since Gulab Singh was to be used by government as a witness to the attack in Amritsar abattoir case so he was acquitted, despite death sentence from the court.

Suba Giani Ratan Singh and Ratan Singh Naiwala were put behind bars in Ludhiana prison with the fake charges of having instigated against the British rule.

Hanging board was set at Raikot. 3 Sikhs : Gurmukh Singh, Mangal Singh and Mastan Singh, kissed the noose and attained martyrdom on 5 August 1871.

Ludhiana

A law suit was filed against Suba Giani Ratan Singh and Ratan Singh Naiwala On 21 September 1871. Besides Dal Singh and Ram Kaur, new witness was Gulab Singh. Session judge awarded them with death sentence on 26 October 1871. Verdict was sent to 3 judges of Chief Court to get the death sentence orders sealed. Judge Bailinos commuted the death sentence to exile on the basis of doubtful witness, but Judge Campbell and third judge Lindsay confirmed the death sentence on 14 November and 23 November 1871 respectively.

On 26-November 1871, both the Namdhari Sikhs swung from the noose outside the prison; however they gave the message that the struggle for independence against foreign rule would continue even after their death.

These Sikhs of Sri Satguru Ji became topic of discussion among the people. As per Sri Satguru Ji's instructions, they spoke the truth by going to court,

though they performed prime sacrifices. The British could see its contrary meaning. The British understood that the Namdhari Sikhs had sacrificed their lives and that these Sikhs did not consider the British their rulers. The Britishers wanted that the Sikhs should follow their orders rather than that of *Satguru Sacha Patshah* whose orders were supreme for them.

His disciples were in special attire and followed a special code of conduct. Their relations with foreign countries were growing. They were staunch enemy of the British rule. They had adopted complete non-cooperation with the government. They had qualities of fighters too.

From districts to circles and from circles to Punjab government and from there to Government of India and its offices in England, some of the following reports were sent :

I see in the earlier papers that (Guru) Ram Singh was looked upon as a successor or actual re-embodiment of Guru Nanak, the saint. He is now the representative of Govind, the warrior.

Guru Ram Singh has no pretention to be the saintly *fakir*. He visits you attended by half a dozen horsemen. He is followed by scores of men on foot. He comes into your courtroom like a prince.

-Statements of J. W. Macnabb Commissioner, Ambala

"When first heard of as the successor of (Guru) Balak Singh of Hazro, he was known as Ram Singh Mahant, afterwards as Guru Ram Singh, then as Satguru and now as Satguru Patshah."

-G. McAndrew, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Ambala Circle, dated 20th November 1871.

Sri Satguru Ji's visits and propagation were increasing the number of disciples who could control mind and body to

take on long stretched struggle. Till 1871 about 100 thousand followers became his true disciples or deeply impressed by his programme. At that time another event angered 150/200 Namdhari Sikhs and they attacked MalerKotla.

MalerKotla

The Sikhs were distressed by Muslims of MalerKotla- a state of Punjab-because the latter did not stop cow-slaughtering. The slaughtering of an old ox on the order of Kotwal before village Farwahi's *numbardar* Gurmukh Singh, acted as fuel on fire.

Gurmukh Singh told the green grocer, sitting on radish loaded on old ox to take pity on that speechless animal and get down and walk. The issue went before Kotwal of MalerKotla; he got the ox slaughtered right infront of him (Gurmukh Singh) and paid its price to green grocer.

Sulky Gurmukh Singh reached Sri Bhaini Sahib. Mata Jassan Ji (Wife of Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji) had expired in November 1871. The carnival in her memory concluded on 13-January 1872 at Sri Bhaini Sahib. A huge congregation of Sangat had gathered here. 20 metric ton of wheat was baked, pulse was cooked and distributed to Sangat.

The Sangat was returning to their homes, the *Numbardar* narrated the incident of MalerKotla to a group of 100 Sikhs. Sikhs went out of control. A group of them went towards Akal Bunga from Ramsar. Mai Ind Kaur Handiaya and Khem Kaur from Dittupura were also there with them. Ind Kaur got hold of her scarf and gave a call for self sacrifices. 250 Sikhs gathered there. Once they came to know about the incident, they resolved to take revenge. They were ready to kill or to be killed.

The Thanedar (S.H.O.) of Sahnewal was also there with 5 policemen to keep an eye on the gathering. He asked Sri Satguru Ji to stop them. He sent Suba Lakha Singh, but none paid heed to him. Sri Satguru Ji went

himself and he too told his followers to remain calm for the timebeing. But they were ready to do something immediately. Hira Singh and Lehna Singh were their leaders. By drawing a line on the ground with sword, near Akal Bunga, Hira Singh called out that only those who were ready to sacrifice themselves need to cross the line. 140 Sikhs alongwith two ladies crossed the line. In this way this martyr group came into existence. Except for a few axes, spears, crooked bamboo club they were having one or two swords, they didn't have any other weapons. They started marching towards Malerkotla.

When they entered the boundary of Patiala state while going towards Malerkotla a sergeant was sent by the (S.H.O.) *thanedar* to keep an eye on them.

The *Thanedar* went to Ludhiana and submitted complete report to Deputy Commissioner, Cowan. He called solicitors of Patiala and MalerKotla on 14 January 1872 and alerted them of any untoward incident.

By sending Suba Lakha Singh to Ludhiana on 15-January 1872 Sri Satguru Ji also told Cowan to be careful and take immediate action, but instead he detained Suba Ji.

The martyr group reached Rabon via Rampur and Payal villages and stayed overnight. On the night of 14 January, they went to Malaud to ask for help from Sardar Badan Singh und asked for weapons also. On his refusal a skirmish broke out, in anger two persons were killed from each side and 5 injured. They stepped off with few swords, rifles, ammunition and mares from the stable.

The Deputy Commissioner got the news, then he called Sri Satguru Ji through Tehsildar Lehna Singh. His Holiness reached Malaud with 5 *Subas* by riding on horses. The Deputy Commissioner complained to Sri Satguru Ji about bloodshed by the group and said he will be called to Ludhiana, if needed. Sri Satguru Ji tightened

the belts to go to Sri Bhaini Sahib. but on 16th January 1872 he stayed at Siar village because of rain.

MalerKotla was 7 Koh (10 miles) from Malaud. The group that was to become martyrs entered the city before day dawn through Dhaba gate. By crossing streets and roads, they straight away reached locality of *Chirimaar*, where large abattoir was situated. The Sikhs cut loose the ropes of cows and drove the herd away; and reached kotwali from there. By this time uproar had vociferated. Police and people armed themselves and came to confront them. Fierce battle broke out. Kotwal Ahmad Khan and 7 policemen were killed. Many were seriously injured. Rest escaped. 7 Sikhs died and 2 seriously injured, 31 Sikhs were wounded.

The group came out of Kotla and reached at Rar village. Group leader Hira Singh realised that it was not the right time to raise arms, that's why other people did not accompany them. He told his companions that they would surrender, but if someone wanted to return he can go. Many returned and group of 68 Sikhs stayed overnight at village well, kept on reciting *shabads*. Next day they walked to police station Sherpur and surrendered themselves. Their weapons and horses were confiscated, they were detained at Amargarh Fort.

Naib Nazim Niaz Ali informed Maharaja Patiala about their detention. From there the information was sent to Government of India via Punjab Government. It was said that Nazim had arrested Kuka Sikhs from Rar village on 15 January 1872. Nevertheless, in telegram sent to Home Secretary at Calcutta caught from Sherpur on 16 January is written. When Nazim went to Malaud to tell Deputy Commissioner Cowan about his bravery, he has ordered him to reach Malerkotla immediately with Kukas.

The Deputy Commissioner asked the chiefs of

Nabha, Jind, Patiala and Sangrur provinces to send army battalions and cannons to Malerkotla and he himself reached Kotla on 16 January 1872. There he wrote about number of revolutionaries as approximately 125 and told "will hang them or blow them up with cannons the next morning". However, Commissioner Forsyth instructed him not to be in a hurry. He said that he was coming to Malerkotla after exiling Guru Ram Singh Ji.

L. Cowan was kukas' blood thirsty. He was waiting at Malerkotla for Kuka group. Evening fell while reaching Kotla from Sherpur. It was a walking through, rough, uneven and worn out road. 9 cannons were set in Jamalpur ground outside Malerkotla. With 7 by 7, 49 Kukas were blown up the same day. Two cannons were reserved for fear of any attack. A boy Bishan Singh was martyred with sword. To release that innocent boy, Cowan's wife standing beside asked him to set the innocent boy free. To release that boy Cowan laid condition that if the boy Bishan Singh commits that he has no relation with Guru Ram Singh, he will set him free. When the boy Bishan Singh was told about these words he angrily grasped and pulled Cowan's long beard and Bishan Singh was executed.

Despite having received a letter from T. D. Forsyth Commissioner Ambala, not to award death sentence to anyone, the group of last 7 was positioned before the cannons, and fired by Deputy Commissioner.

Next day Forsyth arrived. He blew up remaining 16 Kuka Sikhs by cannons by registering false cases only. Whilst one Wariam Singh was told that he was short so he could not be blown away. Then, he, the brave Sikh gathered some stones and stood on them and joined the martyr group.

At the time of their execution Giani Gian Singh, Sikh

historian himself was present there. He wrote that Kukas themselves kept on coming before cannons like moths do. Cowan had written in his report that the need to tie Kuka to the cannons did not arise. Even though to dwarf this martyrdom, someone has made propaganda that kukas were blown up by tying to cannons.

In this incident the Kukas, who risked their lives were martyred, but both ladies were handed over to Patiala state. Obedient, yes-men were rewarded from Kotla treasury. On 18th January a formal court was held. Among those rewarded were : Rs 1000/- to Naib Nazim Niaj Ali, 300/- to Panjab Singh Darbari, 200/- to Jaimal Singh and Rs 50/- each to other five, This is how the government recognised their faithfulness towards British rule.

As has been written earlier that 4 injured Kukas of Malaud skirmish were detained. To punish them the commissioner reached Malaud with paraphernalia on 19 January 1872. A case was registered; deponents were testified, the session judge awarded exile and life sentence. They were imprisoned in Ludhiana prison.

Although Lieutenant Governor of Punjab appreciated Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner, for their loyalty and justified the proceedings, but in response to a query by a member of British Parliament, Hirland, Under Secretary State, Grant Dough, had to answer on 29-February 1872 that Cowan did not register any case against them. On 30-April 1872 Viceroy of India Lord North Brooke wrote to Punjab Governor that why absolutely helpless Kukas were put to death. The Council of Governor General also disapproved this action as unjust, illegal, beastly, cruel and inhuman.

DC L Cowan did not have a legal right (jurisdiction) to order blowing up Kukas by cannons. So for his evil and illegal act Cowan was dismissed from his job on

20-March-1872 and Forsyth was transferred to Auadh.

On 18 January 1872 at 4 a.m. Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji alongwith prominent Subas was sent to Allahabad from Ludhiana in a special train. Why was Sri Satguru Ji deported if the British rule considered government's stance illegal about Malerkotla incident? Why wasn't this suppression stopped? Reason was aggressive steps of Namdhari organisation. The British government feared their own dooms and extinciton in India.

TERROR TO THE RULERS

Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji was exiled on 18 January 1872 at 4 a.m. He was neither tried in the court of law nor his arrest made public. British rulers were apprehensive that if he was exiled in broad daylight, entire Punjab will stand up in revolt, which may be impossible to control.

Sri Satguru Ji halted at Siar villiage on 2nd half of 17 January as It was raining. He heard the noise of cannons being fired. He said to Suba Kahan Singh who was with him, that there was noise of heavy guns being fired, they have sacrificed their lives. Otherwise they would not have been oppreciated.-Satguru Bilas Baba Santokh Singh

From Siar, Sri Satguru Ji barely reached Sri Bhaini Sahib when Sub-Inspector of Sahnewal, Shah Wali Shah read out the order of Commissioner Forsyth that he (Satguru Ji) was called at Ludhiana. He realised the gravity of the situation. Despite winter late night, rain and blast of cold wind, Sangat was already there to accord a warm welcome to him after coming from Siarh. He gave assurance to his father Baba Jassa Singh, brother Budh Singh, Subas and *sangat*. A bullock cart was called for through Gurdit Singh and He sat in the cart with a woollen turban on and wore a black blanket, accompanied by Bhai Nanu Singh, Suba Sahib Singh and Suba Jawahar Singh. When the cart started rolling, Wali Shah and his companion policemen moved along, *sangat* ran after it, broke up, cried their heart out. He assured the wailing and crying *sangat* by saying that he would

return soon. He instructed them to make Karah (a cooked mixture of wheat flour, purified butter, sugar and water) of Rs 11/- in the morning, distribute it and return to respective homes. Now all read the *Bani* or count your rosary beads of *Naam*.

He, along with *Subas* and *Nanu Singh*, reached Ludhiana at about 1, A.M. The cart was sent back. They were produced before the commissioner. He talked with him (*Satguru Ji*) for 2 hours. He was accused of having complete knowledge about the incidents of Amritsar, Raikot and Malerkotla, but did not bother to divulge any information to the government. So he was being exiled. Besides this, as per *Sant Santokh Singh*, *Firangee* showed two documents. One was of kings of different states mentioning that he should be sent away from the country, if he remained here, he would leave neither you nor us. Second document was of priests of Akal Bunga, of Anandpur, Muktsar, and Damdama. The priests asked the government to take him away from the country, if he remained here in this country, he would spare none of us. The Brahmins already wanted the samething. (*Satguru Bilas - Editor Jaswinder Singh.*)

Bengal regulation Act-III of 1818 was applied. According to this regulation government could detain even those persons against whom there was no sufficient ground for court of law suit or when a case could not be registered as per those proceedings.

Sri Satguru Ji, *Subas*, accompanying assistant and *Suba Lakha Singh*, who came to Ludhiana earlier were sent off for Allahabad at 4 A.M. by a special train. To keep an eye on *Guru Ji*, European officer Jackson and a platoon of 12 Dogras accompanied him.

Lieutenant Colonel Bailey sent a guard from Sahnewal to *Sri Bhaini Sahib* soon after the train took off,

to detain the *Subas*, Kahn Singh, Brahma Singh, Hukma Singh, Pahara Singh, Gopal Singh and Sujan Singh and reached Ludhiana. By considering the later two less dangerous, they were sent back. Others were sent to Allahabad through train on the next day, on 19 January 1872 under the supervision of Gurkha guard. Later Roor Singh, Malook Singh and Man Singh were also sent to Allahabad. None had any warrant. Later on, Magistrate of Allahabad was sent warrants on 22 January 1872. Besides this, Maharaja Patiala sent Sant Mangal Singh Bishanpuria to Allahabad.

Due to the demolished wall of Allahabad jail and out of fear of running of detainees, Sri Satguru Ji and others were detained in the fort.

A letter had already been secretly circulated on 28th July 1871 by colonel JCP Bailey Deputy Inspector General of Police, Punjab that whosoever an organisation or individual gave information about the *Kukas*, shall be awarded. Similar letter was received by circle office Ambala also.

As a result of this, reports started arriving from different places. A *Kuka* regiment in Kashmir was dismantled as its result on 27-November 1871; a secret list of Sri Satguru Ji, *Subas* and 50 effective *Namdhari* Sikhs was sent secretly to Inspector General Police, Punjab. All Deputy Inspector Generals Police were reminded again on 3rd January 1872 that secret records about *Kukas* must be collected in each district.

There was a panic and helter-skelter because of wide spread fear due to *Namdhari* Panth. An imminent grave danger of *Kuka* revolt seemed dooms day for the British rule. J.W. Macnabb sent a report to secretary Punjab from L.H. Griffin. In which it was written that objective of *Kukas* was not only to punish butchers so as

to put an end to cow slaughter, it was an open disobedience of British rule. It was revolt against British government. There was a rumour that in the month of Chetar (April 1872), Kuka Guru would have a heavy demonstration of his strength and avenge the execution of Giani Singh (Suba Ratan Singh)

It was decided that 100 men will go to Malerkotla, to put an end to cow slaughter, take control of its capital and distribute the ammunition and horses among all. This will be followed by attacks on Nabha, Jind and Patiala. Roads and rail will be disrupted between Ludhiana and Ambala.

For the enormous gathering people were coming to Sri Bhaini Sahib by selling their property. 23 families of Sakraudi village of Patiala province had sold their property and come into the fold of Sri Satguru Ji. Likewise it was done by Dewa Singh of Jind.

It was written in the report that Bishan Singh in Kabul, Narain Singh in Gwalior, Kahan Singh in Banaras, Nihang Singh (Kahan Singh Nihang) and Sahib Singh in Nepal and Hema in Kashmir were preaching Namdhari ideology. *Mastane Kukas* were confident that they will make the British pack off. Macnabb understood that provincial and British army had got thousands of *Kukas*, whom Suba Jawahar Singh has told to keep their identity secret. Guru Ram Singh Ji corresponded often with Nepal and Jammu. So in Chetar (April 1872), full probability of revolt against government existed. According to them, during *Maghi* carnival on 11-13 January 1872 this strategy was chalked out and accordingly they attacked Malerkotla.

The aim of all the suppression was that they could not tolerate the growing popularity of Satguru Ram Singh and *Namdhari Panth*. To curb its ascent the British exiled Sri Satguru Ji.

At Allahabad British Council's order reached, instructing to keep Sri Satguru Ji out of Indian soil in British Burma (Myanmar). So on 10 March 1872, Satguru Ji and Nanu Singh were sent to Howrah under surveillance of an inspector. From there they were sent to Rangoon (Yangon) by ship. This task too was kept so secret out of fear, that other *Subas* under house arrest in Allahabad fort would not know where the British had taken Sri Satguru Ji. Sant Mangal Singh was let off on 3-March-1872 on recommendation of Maharaja Patiala.

About detention of Sri Satguru Ji on the orders of Governor General Council, Secretary of Home Department of Government of India was sent to inform of warrants of Sri Satguru Ji on 9th March 1872 to Chief Commissioner of British Burma from Calcutta. They wrote on 11 March that he had been put on board at 7 pm same evening. (Sri Ram Singh, put on board all right at 7 pm)

After exiling him, the government machinery came into further action. Reports about each *Suba* was sought from Punjab police. JW Macnubb Commissioner Ambala, went to Allahabad and took testimony of Kukas. Already prepared decisions were sealed by council and sent on orders of Secretary, Government of India; the actions about detention of *Subas* were taken as follows.

1. Suba Man Singh and Suba Hukma Singh were detained in Chunar fort on 1-December 1872 for an indefinite period.
2. Suba Roor Singh, Malook Singh and Pahara Singh were confined to fort of Asirgarh on 15 December 1872 for an indefinite period.
3. Suba Lakha Singh, Jawahar Singh and Brahma Singh were sent to Moulmeen (Burma) via Calcutta on 30 December 1872 for a long duration.

4. Suba Sahib Singh and Suba Kahn Singh were initially detained at Allahabad, but on 12-February 1873, were sent to Aden.

All were sent on different dates and to different places, in such a way that none would know about the others.

Although government wanted to relax by putting an end to their activities, but Sri Satguru Ji's access was longer than the British. He managed correspondence with Punjab. That's why a letter of Punjab Secretary Griffin was sent to Secretary Government of India EC Bailey.

Guru Ram Singh and his companions were keeping correspondence with Punjab through 2 maids and a grocer from whom they used to get grocery. A strict vigil was kept on all visitors.

By the way government itself helped some mail to be delivered. Few of its samples are given in the book "Hukumname of Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji" compiled by Jaswinder Singh, research scholar.

In November 1872 a letter written by Budh Singh (Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji) was sent to Rangoon to Sri Satguru Ji and his letter of February 1873 was delivered to his brother Budh Singh.

In October 1873 letter from Subas at Aden was delivered to Sri Satguru Ji in Rangoon.

On 9 December 1876 letter of Suba Maan Singh from Chunar was delivered to Sri Satguru Ji.

In July and September 1878 letter of Bibi Nandan (daughter of Sri Satguru Ji) and Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji were translated into English and delivered to him.

There was complete vigil on Sri Satguru Ji. Wherever he was detained, was kept separately from other

prisoners; the jailors or other officers were alert about this, so that none could meet him; so had strict vigil of guard round the clock.

On reaching Rangoon initially Satguru Ji was detained at central Jail with all facilities of Royal political prisoner. This ward was earlier a ward for female prison. It was also the ward for European prisoners. There was also a well in it (Satguru Ji used to consume water of well only). A little walk around was allowed but Satguru Ji was not allowed to meet anyone. He was provided with a cow. Besides Nanu Singh, 3 upper caste Hindus were under his service. The government already got it signed by Nanu Singh that he would live with him at his own will. And in the service of King, my Guru, without objection and will live duly detained.

He told officers about hot weather, subsequently he was shifted to Rangoon cantonment Post Office Building. In the same building Bahadur Shah Zafar along with his wife Zeenat Mahal was detained for about 4 years. It was here that Bahadur Shah took his last breath in 1866.

In this building a well was dug out, the same cow was provided for milk. The government used to spend around Rs 40 /- per month in which almonds were also be given.

Sri Satguru Ji asked for 2 books of selective *Bani* of Sri Adi Granth Sahib and Sri Dasam Granth Sahib, from the government. The Government sent all *Banis* except Bachitar Natak.

Satguru Ji would do *naam simran*, reading scriptures and meditation and contemplation during detention. He would think of mode to establish contact with countrymen. No one could sense information about his being there. Still by dexterity he found a way to develop relations with locals. After coming here, he

planned to serve a lunch to Pundits. He would talk to Nanu Singh loudly, so that someone might come to know that there were some *Punjabis* there.

Guru Hari Singh Ji's application of 13th January 1873 to visit Sri Satguru Ji was rejected. In Punjab Harnam Singh and his wife Mai Chando asked for permission to see Sri Satguru Ji. They got the permission to come to Rangoon on 23rd October 1874, but were not allowed to see him.

Then Numberdar of Raipur, Darbara Singh tried and got a chance to see Satguru Ji. For some work, he had to go to the residence of Ludhiana SP Warbutton. His wife asked the reason of his sadness, weak body, tearful eyes. She felt pity when Darbara Singh told her that they haven't got any information about Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji; she tactfully asked from Warbutton and informed him about whereabouts of Satguru Ji. Darbara Singh had sold property and submitted it in Guru's name and used to live at Sri Bhaini Sahib. By hearing Rangoon's address from Madam Warbutton, Darbara Singh's face brightened up. He reached at the right place under disguising and got clues. He brought back *Hukumnama* (direction) of Sri Satguru Ji that Budh Singh's name became Hari Singh from that day. He would keep *Sikhi* intact. He brought this *Hukumnama* in January 1975.

This news of whereabouts of Satguru Ram Singh Ji spread like scent of flowers through Sri Bhaini Sahib. The Sikhs used to go to meet Sri Satguru Ji. They would go with prayers, return with *Hukumnama*, but everything happened secretly. Some would have to grease the palm of the security persons also.

There was a dwelling of a *Bairagi* saint, nearby Sri Satguru Ji's bungalow. He would also help; bit further away mango trees were there. Namdahri Sikhs would

keep sitting under those trees. When Sri Satguru Ji would come out on horse cart for a stroll they would had glimpse of him.

How much was the security kept by British, about this Sri Satguru Ji wrote in a Hukumnama "One who is top white man whose order prevails over all countries, his order is pasted on the wall, if someone talks to him (Satguru Ji) then arrest that person, if someone throws anything from outside to inside or from inside to outside arrest that one too. Don't let anyone stand before him."

- Hukumnama 9

ਜਿਹੜਾ ਬਡਾ ਗੋਰਾ ਹੈ, ਸਾਰੇ ਦੇਸਾਂ ਉਤੇ ਜਿਸਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਚਲਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਲਿਖਾ ਏਥੇ ਕੰਧ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਲਾਇਆ ਹੈ, ਜੇ ਕੋਈ ਆਦਮੀ ਏਸਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਗਲਬਾਤ ਕਰੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਕੈਦ ਕਰੋ, ਕੇ ਕੋਈ ਬਾਹਰ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਟੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਜਾਂ ਅੰਦਰੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਸਿੱਟੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਭੀ ਕੈਦ ਕਰੋ। ਅਰ ਕੋਈ ਆਦਮੀ ਨਾ ਏਥੇ ਸੋਹੋਂ ਖੜਾ ਹੋਣ ਦਿਓ।

Sri Satguru Ji also writes—

- They (British) seriously think that through his correspondence he could motivate his followers to rebel against the *raj*.

-Hukumnama 6

ਏਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਏਹੁ ਬਡਾ ਭਰਮ ਹੈ ਚਿਠੀ ਦੀ ਬੜੀ ਤਕੜਾਈ ਰਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਮੇਰੀ, ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿਤੇ ਚਿਠੀ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਮੁੜ ਸੂੜ ਨਾ ਕਰਾਏ ਦੇਵੇ। ਏਥੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਆਦਮੀ ਹੈ।

- Even after bringing here, they (British) are still scared of my presence as if I could re-enact of revolt of 1857. It is this fear that they don't allow any person to see him.

ਪਿਛੋਂ ਤਾਂ ਲਿਆਏ ਹੈ, ਜੇ ਏਥੇ ਰਹਾ ਤਾਂ ਚੋਂਦੇ ਬਰਗਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਾਇ ਦਊਗਾ। ਅਰ ਹੁਣ ਇਹ ਡਰ ਹੈ ਭਾਈ ਚਿਠੀ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਸੂੜ ਕਰਾ ਦਿਊ। ਏਹੁ ਭਰਮ ਹੈ। ਮੇਰੇ ਸਰੀਰ ਦਾ ਕਾਲ ਬਰਗਾ ਭੈ ਹੈ ਏਨਾ ਨੂੰ। ਏਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਾਸ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਆਉਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦੇ।

ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮਾ-9

UNLEASHING STORM OF ATROCITIES

The British government was afraid that Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji would lit such a bonfire against government in Punjab that its heat would burn the British. So he was exiled. The government was also afraid that in his absence, his courageous warriors would create chaos in Punjab. To take care of it the British put strict restrictions on the Namdhari Sikhs (*Kukas*).

The notorious step in this regard was to destroy their religious centre at Sri Bhaini Sahib. The British got a clue about arms, treasure and secret documents being kept there. So after exiling Sri Satguru Ji, Lieutenant Colonel JCP Bailey, DIG Lahore circle with 25 policemen surrounded Sri Bhaini Sahib early morning on 18th January 1872. They expelled Sri Satguru Ji's father Baba Jassa Singh, brother Budh Singh (Guru Hari Singh Ji), daughter Bibi Nand Kaur, her three kids, Manager of Shop, Wariam Singh, his personal assistant Makhan Singh and all Sikhs from the headquarters for shivering in the cold. Every recess in wall, almirah, nook and corner were searched for. Even the land was dug up. Granaries were searched by pushing spears. It was searched again on 19th January 1872. On both days 3 *Numberdars* of village were their accomplices. Entire property, treasury and arms were enlisted.

The confiscated articles comprised 36 axes, 6 broad axe with long handles, 2 Khukhris, a battle axe, a club, Rs. 1828/- 8 Anna cash, gold, silver ornaments, shawls, lohi, rosary of wood, valuable embroidered gown.

Approximately, movable property worth Rs. 5400 was locked in and sent to Ludhiana. At Sri Bhaini Sahib, 172 Sikh gentlemen and ladies used to live. Besides, there were 82 milk cattle and horses etc.

3 men and 2 ladies were allowed to stay to serve the family members of Satguru Ji, 11 *Kuka* Sikhs to cater for animals were permitted to live at the gurdwara and the rest were made to walk 13-14 miles to Ludhiana. There Deputy Commissioner warned them not to take up any revolutionary activity and told them to return to their respective homes.

At Sri Bhaini Sahib in the gateway-porch, police post consisting of inspector Umrao Ali Shah and 20 other policemen was established, to keep vigil on anyone going out. From outside; only five persons were allowed to enter at a time.

Restrictions on gathering, assembly of more than 5 *Kukas* was laid in place by a letter of Punjab Lieutenant Governor. Strict action was to be taken if more than 5 persons assembled.

To give proof of their loyalty, to the British, notable *Punjabis*, including Sikhs, approved government action. Among those were Sri Bhaini Sahib's *numberdar* Ghumanda and Sukhu, the Sikh chiefs, landlords, *Mahants* and priests of gurdwaras, Rajas and Maharajas. As per letter of 20th January 1872 Maharaja Patiala announced confiscation of properties of *Kukas* and alleged that under religious pretext (Guru) Ram Singh's aim and desire was to regain the reign.

The statement of such *Punjabis* is mentioned in Punjab Government Gazette 22, March 1872. It had signatures of 14 representatives. In May 1872 it was affirmed by *Nawabs*, rich money lenders and 147 persons of municipality of Jalandhar and on 28 June, 1872 Karnal,

Jagadhari, Bilaspur, Mustafabad and Ambala. 140 prominent citizens of Hoshiarpur and 500 *Sodhis*, *Bedis* and *Rais* of Anandpur gathered in support of British. 437 landlords, members of municipal committee, *zaildar*, money lenders of Jalandhar got together under the chairmanship of Sardar Bikram Bahadar Singh Ahluwalia and on 28 August 1872 a letter was written to Punjab government that *Kukas* were wrong and TD Forsyth commissioner Ambala was right. *Sardars*, Chiefs and *Nawabs* of Karnal and *Kalsia* along with their henchmen were too among them. Lists of their signatures as well as lists of signatures of Jagadhari, Bilaspur, Manimajra were attached alongwith. Sangrur's Maharaja ordered that everybody must renunciate Namdharism. Maharaja Faridkot acted like a devil. he tortured *Kukas*. The press through various daily papers-The English Man, The Hindu Patriot, Indian Statesman, Friends of India sided with the government too.

Everyone was enemy of *Kukas*. They could not understand what their fault was. No one knew where their spiritual head was. They could neither go to anyone nor to share their suffering and grief.

DSP of each and every district was told to make lists of *Kukas*, with their names and addresses as if they were criminals, and to keep tight vigil on them. On 8 March 1872 a government order was issued to enlist those too who would bail them out.

A storm of atrocities blew against *Kukas*. Those unprincipled and some greedy *Zaildars*, *numbardars* and chiefs etc. who were waiting for the establishment of *Kuka* rule, now declared that they were not *Kukas*. Among them were Hari Singh of Dera Baba Nanak and Kartar Singh Bedi. DC Gurdaspur sent their report to Superintendent of Police of the division.

The Namdhari Sikhs could not understand this as God's will, but to keep them spiritually strong, they started meditation on *naam simran* and contemplation. They were already reading scriptures. They continued their political boycott of the government in terms of following Satguru's *maryada* which kept them socially and spiritually stronger. The government records admit that:

1. Kuka does not tell a lie.
2. Does not drink
3. Can't be loyal to British subject.

However political activity was not evident among Namdhari Sikhs in tangible form. They were shattered by the separation of Sri Satguru Ji.

During those days Kukas heard news that a *Pathan* from Peshawar, Gul Sher Khan had bumped off Viceroy of India Lord Meo on 8th February 1872 at Andaman Islands. They thought that it was he who was responsible for exiling Sri Satguru Ji and committing atrocities on Namdharis. God had punished him for his misdeeds.

There were restrictions on worship and recitation of *Gurbani* too. Guru Hari Singh Ji organised an *Akhand Path* on Dussehara 1872, but DSP JP Warbutton did not allow for its ceremonial closing (*Bhog*) and obstructed it.

Due to the absence of any political activities, it appeared to the government that Kukas had slowed down purposely. Such reports were sent to Government of India by Punjab government. Those reports were collected districtwise.

Due to political sluggishness of Kukas, on 18th February 1873 a letter was issued to all DIG's not to enforce strictly the assembly of 5 Kukas together. But to watch them closely. The officers wanted to assess the situation to handover the property of Guru Ram Singh Ji to Guru Hari Singh Ji.

DAWN AGAINST DARKNESS OF SERVITUDE

Those people who upheld the cause of motherland dearly, got together at Amritsar. They wanted to save the nation from being engulfed by the forces of darkness. They were awakened by the threat of conversion of 4 Sikh students to Christianity. In 1873 an organisation was formed here, its main leaders were Baba Khem Singh Bedi, Thakar Singh Sandhawalia, Kanwar Bikram Singh Kapurthala. Organisation was named Singh Sabha and Sandhawalia became its President. This Sabha attracted attention of the Sikhs

This Singh Sabha did not appear to be loyal to the government. Lahore's Singh Sabha, which was formed by Gurmukh Singh appealed to the government. The following were a part of their programme :

1. Nothing will be talked about the government in Sri Guru Singh Sabha
2. Well being of Qaum (religion), and obedience to government, will be taken care of.

W.H. McLeod wrote about the Sikhs associated with the ideology of Singh Sabha : "These men were conservatives and alarmed by the disturbances caused by *Kuka* Sikhs, were anxious that the orthodox Sikh community should not be blamed by their British rulers."

-Sikhs of the Khalsa

From the same Singh Sabha, Khalsa Divan and Chief Khalsa Divan sprouted, which supported the British.

Baba Khem Singh Bedi was in favour of considering Guru Ram Singh Ji as 12th Guru of Sikhs. It was this reason that he supported the book *Khurshid Khalsa* (Urdu) of Bawa Nihal Singh Kalsian. The book stated that Guru Ram Singh Ji was 12th Guru, a successor of Guru Gobind Singh. It is a different issue that under pressure of Gurmukh Singh and company and out of fear of government, Bawa acknowledged that "Guru word will not be written before the name of Janab Singh Sahib Ram Singh"

The information about the return of Maharaja Dalip Singh to Punjab in 1889, was celebrated by the Amritsar group, but Lahore's Singh Sabha wrote on 20th October 1889 in response to Maharaja's letter to come back to Punjab, "We entire Khalsa Panth and residents of Gujranwala, with whom you feel related because of your birth place, are replying to that letter of yours. "you have rebelled against British government It is not a wise act ".

This was an act of conspiracy by the British so as to separate and confuse Sikhs from the embodied Guru and perplex them as worshippers of *Granth Guru* or *Panth Guru* and getting religious edicts by people flanking them against Namdhari Sikhs and oppose them. Sri Satguru Ji wrote so in an Hukumnama :

"First the "grace of Sikhs" bestowed on Bir Singh then on Maharaj Singh and now grace of Sikhs has been bestowed on me." -Hukumnama 7

“ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਹੋਈ, ਫੇਰ ਮਹਾਰਾਜ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਹੋਈ ਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਮੇਰੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ।”

25 Kukas were sent to Mahant Narain Singh in Nabha, to baptise them by administering *Amrit* as per the order of *Takhats*, the Sikh temporal seat. It was publicly proclaimed in Bagliwala that now Satguru would not return, so they should give up Kukaism. Investigation started in Hazro also.

When a few *Kukas* stayed overnight at village Takhrian; the police came to know about it. The police expressed its anger on *Numberdar* that why did he allow them to stay. As a penalty for this crime, he was dismissed from *Numberdari* and was sentenced to six years rigorous imprisonment and Rs 100/- fine was also imposed on him.

Even reading scriptures by *Kukas* was a crime. Lohgarh's Sardar Attar Singh son of Sant Hakam Singh Grewal organised *Akhand Path* (continuous reading of *Sri Adi Granth Sahib*) he invited *Sadh Sangat*, informers sent the information to police station. Police came and disturbed the occasion. S Attar Singh was prosecuted and awarded 5 years imprisonment. (He expired in prison itself.) Sant Kishan Singh Chhutiya was awarded 3 years, all *Pathis* (Granth readers) Harnam Singh, Labh Singh, Rai Singh, Lal Singh were awarded 2 years imprisonment each and *Dhupiyas*, guards and cooks were imprisoned for 6 months each. -who reads *Japji* and perform other *acffuities*.

In Khyala village, because of bit relaxed restrictions, Baba Sant Singh of Majha got 101 readings of scriptures and *Hawan* of 60 Kg ghee was performed. He had to face 5 years imprisonment. Government used to keep strict vigil on those also who read *Chandi Di Vaar*—a *Bani* of Guru Gobind Singh Ji

As already mentioned, the *Kukas* could come to monastery in groups of 5 to pay reverence to Guru Hari Singh Ji. So, hundreds of men and women kept spending their nights on the sand, under the open sky, beyond the boundary of *Sri Bhaini Srahib* and waited for their turn.

In June 1877, permission was granted to visit in groups of 10 each in stead of 5. They felt relief.

According to *Hukamnama* of Sri Satguru Ram Singh

Ji, Kukas could feel satisfied and happy having Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji as spiritual head. That's why they started coming to visit him. By the year 1875 they also started tracing the routes to Rangoon (yangoon) under disguise. None could catch those who were praying to Satguru Ram Singh Ji and bringing *Hukumnamas* till 1880. Here also government was in the dark because of changed names. As Baba Budh Singh was Guru Hari Singh Ji now in *Hukumnamas*, as per strategy of Sri Satguru Ji.

"Write my name as Dyal Singh and Nanu Singh's
Kirpal Singh" -Hukumnama 13

Sri Satguru Ji guided relations with Russia. Names were kept secret there too; Russia's Swaroop Singh and British's Billa Singh.

"He had said while going, that I'd come to Rangoon soon. Then you (Narain Singh) pass on entire information to him in writing. You must write about Swaroop Singh and Billa Singh" - Hukumnama

Kukas used to go to Rangoon in disguise from here; would live in Thakarwadi there, which was called as Shiv Mandir. They would sit near Bahadur Shah Zafar's grave, or under mango trees or near ascetic saint. After realising the intention of guards Sri Satguru Ji, would spread towel to dry, meaning signal to come closer. Namdhari Sikhs used to go close to his Bungalow, would speak loudly in Punjabi, which guards could not understand. *Hukamnamas* were thrown out wrapped in stone or cloth and from outside (letters) prayers were thrown in. Sri Satguru Ji used to instruct to do meditation say prayers and would tell them not to come to Rangoon because of heavy expenses and inconvenience. There would be less interaction and more scare of government and fear.

Sri Satguru Ji would give *darshan* at 7 A.M., 12 Noon in the morning and in the evening at 4 by sitting outside the bungalow. He used to go for a stroll on horse cart 3 to 4 times a week, then too Namdhari Sikhs used to have his glimpse. Nearby Bahadur Shah's grave, his wife Zeenat Mahal also used to live with her son. She got a feeling that some emperor, similar to grandeur of her husband, was detained in the bungalow, but would not converse with him out of fear of government. After having a glimpse of His divine appearance while going on horse cart, she started cursing the British rulers.

Rulers of India would write to Chief Commissioner of Burma that the Sikhs were returning after meeting Guru Ram Singh in Rangoon, watched closely but none was caught. In 1880 Sri Satguru Ji threw *Hukumnama* from the bungalow for Dhanna Singh Gumtiwala. He was about to slip away after getting hold of it, the policeman Abdulla Khan ran and caught him. He was presented in magistrate's court there itself. However since this place was not under prison act so no action could be taken. Dhanna Singh was sent to India.

Ishar Singh Ramdasia was living at Sri Bhaini Sahib. He became informer and used to give copies of *Hukumnamas* to DSP Ludhiana Warbuton. Satguru Hari Singh Ji expelled him from the monastery in 1878. On 19 March 1887 DSP caught copies of *Hukumnamas* by raiding Mai Atri.

Jaswinder Singh has compiled 63 edicts (*Hukamnamas*) sent by Satguru Rarn Singh Ji along with a *Rahitnama* (in the form of a book). About their literary, political, cultural and religious splendour there are valuable introductions by eminent Punjabi scholars -Dr Harbhajan Singh, Dr S S Noor and Jaswinder Singh. These edicts were published by Namdhari Darbar in 1998 by the grace and blessings of Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji.

British Government apprehended that through his letters, Guru Ram Singh could motivate the *Kukas*. Similarly the government was scared of this interaction which could lead to a big rebellion in the wake of developing relations with Russia and exiled Maharaja Dalip Singh. So out of fear, they transferred Sri Satguru Ji from Rangoon to Mergoi using ship Ananda on 18 September 1880. Satguru Ji's personal attendant Nanu Singh and Nand Lal were also transferred.

At Rangoon, Sri Satguru Ji used to quarrel with Nanu Singh, occasionally, at times he would beat him. This continued in Mergoi. He told Nanu Singh to go back to Punjab. He came to Punjab enroute Moulmeen, Calcutta on 14 November 1881. He was not allowed to visit Sri Bhaini Sahib, but he came to Sri Bhaini Sahib in disguise and told anecdotes of Guru Ram Singh Ji to Guru Hari Singh Ji.

Due to frequent quarrels with Nanu Singh and beating him, the government started thinking on the line that Sri Satguru Ji had lost his mental balance. The doctors did a check-up, and reported nothing was wrong with him. Nandu cook also told that there was a trick behind such an act. However, people of Mergui were sympathetic to him.

One more event further added to his reputation. Mergoi's rich merchant Rangi Ram married thrice, but could not have children. He wished and prayed to seek Satguru's blessings for an issue. By listening to his humble request, guards allowed him to pay his reverence to Sri Satguru Ji. He brought all three wives to pay their respects, then Sri Satguru Ji bestowed two of them to have two boys each and one boy to the third one. Rich merchant proclaimed about his greatness after being father of 5 sons..

The reason to have strange attitude towards Nanu Singh, was that His Holiness wanted to think and plan alone and afresh about his political strategy in the wake of *Kukas*, improving relations with Russia and Maharaja Dalip Singh.

Baba Gurcharan Singh of Sialkot was an old comrade of Khalsa army. He had become Namdhari. He was in Kabul and Ghazni. He was active in Central Asia. He wrote many letters and told Russian General in Samarkand about *Kukas*, strength and power. He delivered letters of 3rd and 27 October 1880 to the general. Informer of government, Gulab Khan who conspired with the British, was following Gurcharan Singh. He won confidence of Gurcharan Singh by indulging into anti British talks. He acquired all information and passed on to government..

Gulab Khan had given statement about the activities of Narain Das of Hazro, Mayia Ram Charan Tola of Gujranwale, Shankar Rai of Haripur etc. Attar Singh Bhadauria was also an informer.

Mihan Singh reached Sri Satguru Ji in Mergoi with similar letter from Russia. As he used to be in HongKong police; so he reached Sri Satguru Ji in the same uniform; and handed over Russia's letter.

Bishan Singh Arora, Buta Singh of Lahore and Banarasi Das were maintaining contacts with Maharaja Dalip Singh. Banarasi Das kept on his wanderness in Agra, Mathura, Merut. In 1883 rumours were widespread about the arrival of Maharaja in India. Bishan Singh was sent to Russia enroute Tashkent in 1883 itself.

During these days Burma's King Thibu rebelled against British. The Government detained him in Madras on 29 December 1885. The same day civil surgeon

Mergoi wrote to Deputy Commissioner Mergoi that political prisoner Guru Ram Singh had expired at 4:30 because of weakness due to diarrhoea, and was cremated on the following day at 8 A.M. But the truth was, that Sri Satguru Ji had gone into hiding. If government declared him absconding, the failure of their strict vigil would be evident.

Proof of Sri Satguru Ji being alive is written in government records itself. As per 1885 Jail reports none of the prisoners expired due to diarrhoea. Secondly, Sir Charles Bernard Chief Commissioner of British Burma wrote to Attar Singh Bhadauria the following year on 23 August 1886, "Ram Singh Kuka is being transferred to a remote place, where communication with him will be less easy."

Alongwith Sri Satguru Ji, other Subas detained at different places, Suba Sahib Singh had expired in 1879, Suba Jawahar Singh and Suba Pahara Singh had expired in 1882, and Suba Lakha Singh expired in 1903 at Moulmeen. In 1884 Suba Aroor Singh expired in prison itself and Suba Kahn Singh, Suba Man Singh, Suba Hukma Singh, Suba Malook Singh, Suba Brahma Singh were sent to Punjab with the condition that they would not visit Sri Bhaini Sahib and would not resort to rebellious preaching.

Satguru Hari Singh Ji had started taking tours to preach since 1878 with the permission of government. He went to Mukatsar on *Maghi* and Damdama on *Vaisakhi*. But many times he had to return on Warbutton's orders on complaints. Still Namdhari Sikhs got full mental and psychological strength from his visit. Government had sent a list of 252 dangerous *Kukas* of all districts on 31 December 1880, so that a special vigil be kept on them.

The Police used to create problems at Sri Bhaini Sahib. Once in January 1883, Genda, a policeman

pursued maliciously Bhagwan Singh Arbangi. Arbangi went back. Genda followed him. He was accompanied by his subordinates at the post. Arbangi warned a lot but he wanted reward by getting him arrested. Genda did not stop even after crossing Sri Bhaini Sahib's boundary. Rather he hit Arbangi with a stick, Arbangi had a *Khoonda* (a special bamboo stick). He positioned himself and hit *Khoonda* at Genda's temple so forcefully that Genda tossed down on the ground, and died after having another hit. Munshi came back out of fear.

Mai Atar Kaur of Khana (Maisor Khana) used to live at Sri Bhaini Sahib. On Guru Hari Singh Ji's order, she received the keys (charge) of gurdwara after Sant Daan Singh. She approached Suba Khushahal Singh many times and encouraged him to send his daughters, Mata Jeevan Kaur and Mata Fateh Kaur, for voluntary services at the monastery. He reached Sri Bhaini Sahib in October 1888 with both of his daughters and according to Sant Santokh Singh, "Maharaj (Guru) Hari Singh and Mai Jeevan Kaur got wedded"

—*Satguru Bilas.*

On 9 March-1890 Satguru Hari Singh and Mata Ji were blessed with a child". Guru Hari Singh Ji said happily "owner of the house has come, he is very powerful and magnificent. Maharaj Nihal Singh in 1892 and Maharaj Gurdyal Singh in 1897 were born to Mata Ji. Happiness prevailed all over Namdhari *Panth*.

Sri Satguru Ji toured Amritsar in 1892, blessed Sikhs of Amritsar on Diwali 1893; and organised carnival on 1 September 1897 in memory of Baba Jameaat Singh. In 1898 during the Kar-Sewa (voluntary services labour) of Ramsar *Sarovar*, he led by lifting heavy baskets.

Now police did not interfere much. Keys of the monastery were handed over from Mai Atar Kaur to Mai Gurdei and from her to Mata Jeevan Kaur on 1 August 1899 as desired by Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji.

By getting permission from government, Guru Hari Singh Ji organised Hola Mohalla carnivals from 1899 to 1905 subsequently at Guru Chak, Rori Sahib, Saidowal, Matwi, Gill, Sri Bhaini Sahib etc. Namdhari Sikhs, leaders and followers participated with great enthusiasm. There was huge gathering. Hola of 1906 was at Manawala; He could not go himself because of eye problem, but sent Mata Ji and his eldest son (Satguru) Partap Singh Ji.

Satguru Hari Singh Ji left for heavenly abode on 17 May 1906. As he already conversed to Magha Singh Bilaspur, Surjit Singh Moron and Mahant Sewa Singh saying "Now you all follow Partap Singh", accordingly Satguru Partap Singh Ji was seated on this prestigious spiritual seat (*Gurgaddi*).

Despite atrocities and oppression, *Kukas* were nudged and they did not let crumble their religious feelings, *Maryada* and political strength.

As per 1891 census such *Kukas* were not only comprised of Sikhs, but Hindus and *Muslims* also. *Kuka Hindu* 690, *Kuka Sikh* 10541, *Kuka Musalman* – 5.

STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

In early 20th century, the District Gazetteer, Ludhiana appreciated the fact that "the question of Kukas being loyal to British does not arise" This truth stood rock solid despite continuous atrocities of government and their informers. In its background beside physical and mental power, there was vital hand of intellectual and spiritual strength of *Kukas* nurtured through meditation, reading scriptures as per *Maryada* and following instructions of Guru Ram Singh Ji.

For the same objective Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji started meditation on the banks of canal of Sirhind (Neelon) in July 1906. While appraising meditation, he said, "I do not want to eat stale, already frozen food, by sitting idle, exhaust by consuming it." He did meditation for a period of 40 days, which is in continuation till today in the name of Jap-Prayog".

Kukas were restricted to preach openly against the British. In spite of this a process of reformation continued at Bhaini Sahib. Whosoever came to worship as devotee Sikh, he gave up meat and liquor, got engulfed in the grandeur of *Naam*, and returned with the sap of patriotism (in him). Famous patriot Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna got engulfed in the same dye by introduction in the company of Baba Kesar Singh of Muhawa District Amritsar. He wrote in his autobiography:

"From him I developed a taste to be public servant. That rose to the level of extreme love in coming years." -
Meri Jeevan Kahani

Bhakna Ji was the President of Gadar Party established in Canada.

The Punjab was divided between loyal towards motherland and loyal towards government. Wherever there were government excesses, the Kukas would stand against it. Even in those cases where they were not directly involved. In late 19th century, it was a case of cow-protection whereas in early 20th century it was a case of against demolition of wall of Rakabganj Gurdwara (1914) in New Delhi. Sant Mangal Singh Arshi Farishta led an agitation by accompanying Sardool Singh Kavishar and Bhai Randhir Singh, and then Arshi Farishta was taken to his village Fatoohi Chak and put under house arrest. Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji called upon entire *Sangat* at Lahore for this matter. Master Tara Singh wrote about it, "They gathered all sangat at Lahore during that time in such a way that was beyond illustration and it was needed desperately. Baba Ji (Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji) is holding the seat which was blessed by Baba Ram Singh Ji (Guru Ram Singh Ji). He had awakened the Sikh *Panth* at a very crucial moment."

In the agitation at Guru Ka Bagh, Mehtab Singh Namdhari Sahowal (Sialkot) courted arrest.

In 1914, innocents were riddled with government bullets at Budge-Budge Ghat (Kolkata), the government tried to get a verdict from the priests and chiefs that they were not Sikhs. So that they did not rise in protest to encourage Sikhs, Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji called a meeting of prominent leaders at Hoshiarpur, in which he got the resolution passed that they were Sikhs'. The gathering was to sympathise with their families.

In December 1913, marriage of Sri Satguru Ji with 'Bibi Veeran daughter of Sant Sundar Singh and Mai Ram Kaur of village Gurusar district Ferozepur was solemnised

according to *Gursikhi Anand Maryada*. She was renamed as Bibi Bhupinder Kaur. She became -mother of world.

World War-I broke out in 1914. To win favour of the government and to have land grants, Singh Sabha, Chief Khalsa Diwan, Saints, Mahants and Priests etc. got people recruited. The Congress too sided with the government. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi prepared the people of Gujarat for recruitment. 90,000 Sikhs were recruited in Punjab. On the contrary the response of Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji to the rulers was, "I will not give you any support". and no *Kuka* got recruited in the army.

Till then Congress was a moderate party which was just asking for concessions from government, not independence. However, it was founded in 1885 by consultations with Lord Dufferin. A O Hume was its first president. Till 1905 it did not know what to do, Its vision was not clear. From 1905 till 1919, it was still thinking about development of social, cultural and political aspects. During this time its radical group started thinking on different lines and Bal Gangadhar Tilak gave the slogan "Independence is my birth right and I will get it". The Congressmen advocated the cause for independence by using indigenous goods and boycotted foreign goods. The *Kukas* had already boycotted these articles since 1857.

After World War - I instead of giving anything, bullets were fired from 25 guns in the Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar rally. The Jathedar of Akal Takhat Arur Singh presented a robe of honour and a gold bangle to General O' Dwyer, who ordered firing.

On the other hand Ragho Singh Namdhari, who worked against the British, was hanged in 1916 at Lahore. A devotee of Sant Kesar Singh Muhavewale (Amritsar) solidier Kehar Singh, who was having sympathy with

Namdhari Sikhs had to forego his job for distributing *Sau Sakhi* in army.

In 1919 the Congress launched non-violence and non-cooperation movement. On 6 June 1920, Indian National Congress adopted 7 point programme: boycott of government schools, colleges, government courts, election, and foreign goods. Nevertheless, the *Kukas* would boycott the trains and postal system too. It seemed to *Namdhari Sikhs* that by adopting non-cooperation methods, movement of Guru Ram Singh for independence would be won very sooner. However, *Namdhari Sikhs* kept their organisation and *Maryada* intact. According to Sri Satguru Ji's directions they performed meditation, remained vegetarian and read scriptures. They propagated their mission at *Hola Mohalla*.

Since 1917 Maharaj Ripudaman Singh Nabha had been keeping proximity with *Namdhari Sikhs* due to patriotic feelings. Attachment of that ruling family with Sikhism and patriotic feelings were due to *Namdhari Suba Bibi Hukmi* (Mai Mahatma) living there. Due to her encouragement, Maharaja very humbly came to the fold of Sri Satguru Ji and asked for the blessings of a son, which was bestowed upon in 1919. The *raja* sought a visit of Sri Satguru Ji for *Naam*. He offered a Rolls Royce car, horses, money, and land of 5860 *bigha* (at Beer Mararu) to Satguru Ji.

On 1920 *Hola*, by the grace of Sri Satguru Ji, publishing of *Satjug Weekly* started. its life and soul were Maharaj Gurdyal Singh and Nirankar Singh Chetan and Mangal Singh Arshi Farishta were his assistants. Its objective was to improve upon mutual affection, highlight *Namdhari* way of life, history and *Maryada* and to touch and inspire readers for independence of country. The tone of *Satjug* and its preceding *Namdhari* writings viz.

Barahmah of Baba Chanda Singh, writings of Nihal Singh, Kala Singh etc remained anti-imperialist. It was this reason that soldiers were not allowed to read this paper. In Namdhari Gurdwara at Sri Bhaini Sahib, Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh was born on 22 November 1920 (8 Maghar), Monday before dawn to Mata Bhupinder Kaur Ji. Everybody celebrated the birth.

From 17 to 19 January 1921, Sri Satguru Ji organised a carnival at village Muthade (Jalandhar) in memory of martyrs of Malerkotla. Here people of every religion and ideology came to pay homage. Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji was brought into the Palanquin from Phillaur in the form of procession among slogans of Sat Sri Akal, Bande Matram, and Allah-hu-Akbar. In this carnival Dr, Saifuddin Kichlu, Kedar Nath Sehgal, Kishan Singh etc. and a lot of other leaders were present. It was described here in detail about atrocities of British on Namdhari Sikhs and presence of police post at Sri Bhaini Sahib. Similar sort of conferences were held at Sankhatra and Hoshiarpur villages too.

On the eve of Hola Mohalla of 1921, for political and religious activities, 26 Subas were designated. Under the leadership of Maharaj Gurdyal Singh, Namdhari Darbar was constituted. It had a committee of 31 members. All were wise and capable politically.

They organised gatherings at every nook and corner. A Martyr Conference was organised at village Siarh in 1922. In this conference it was resolved that if police post was not removed from Sri Bhaini Sahib, they would take direct action.

A similar resolution was also passed. Government reacted sternly and fined Rs 7500/- to the entire village as to why did they allow the conference to be held there.

Activities against government had risen in Punjab.

Akalis too had agitation at Guru Ka Bagh. To retain the police post seemed to be a politically costly affair for government. So to segregate *Kukas* from others, they removed police post on 12 May 1923. About which PC Hilton Deputy Commissioner Ludhiana wrote a letter to the Guru Sahib (Satguru Partap Singh) and said to him not to give asylum to any absconder. The Namdhari Sikhs started breathing in the open air under auspicious guidance of Sri Satguru Ji.

The British rulers dismissed Maharaja Nabha, Ripudaman Singh for supporting the patriots. The Sikhs flared up when government hampered the *Akhand Path* at Jaiton Gangsar Gurudwara. They started agitation at Jaiton. To break up Namdhari Sikhs from other Sikhs, administrator of Nabha, MG Ogelve wrote a letter to Chief Secretary to the Governor of Punjab on 2 August 1922; not to do anything to revoke the rights of Namdharis on Beer of Nabha.

However, Namdhari Sikhs carried on their activities resolutely against government atrocities. Through Satjug weekly also they criticised the dismissal of Maharaja Nabha. Expressing sympathy with the Jaiton agitation they courted arrest. Among these the reference of imprisonment of Sant Dharam Singh and Sant Buddha Singh of village Chhoti Makhi is in government records. The Namdhari Darbar passed a resolution in favour of agitation; congratulated on the bravery of martyr groups.

In 1923 Sri Satguru Ji ordered to stop any pre-marriage ritual for reforms of marriage ceremonies. Marriage would take place only in accordance with *Gurmaryada*. Dowry had already been prohibited.

In the same year, Mata Bhupinder Kaur gave birth to another child, who was named Bir Singh. Mata Ji was not keeping well because of TB and she left for heavenly abode on 14 September 1924.

For the independence of nation, to locate Satguru Ram Singh Ji and for seclusion to meditate, Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji set out secretly from Sri Bhaini Sahib on his own. His strategy was to meet Raurik, son-in-law of Russian Czar at his garden near Rohtang pass. After that he wanted to reach Russia enroute China. Due to unfavourable conditions, His Holiness started meditation in the name of God at his place of meditation on the banks of Neelon canal (Sirhand).

In 1925, Punjab Congress started an agitation against British from Bredla Hall, Lahore. In it Sant Nidhan Singh Alim, Sant Mangal Singh, Pandit Mansha Singh provided leadership and got themselves arrested. Maharaj Gurdyal Singh participated in agitation too. He spoke fearlessly and effectively about glorious Namdhari history and oppression of police post established by the government for 50 long years and the atrocities on Namdhari Sikhs.

In 1927 Sri Satguru Ji organised a conference in memory of martyrs of Malerkotla, where Maharaj Gurdyal Singh and other leaders spoke about the diplomacy and cruel strategies of the government and highlighted their feelings of independence.

With the gap of a year in 1929 Congress proposed for a session on 29 - 31 December to pass the resolution for complete independence. Maharaj Gurdyal Singh had expired a few days back. So Maharaj Nihal Singh was designated president of Namdhari Darbar as per the order. He began providing the leadership. The Sikhs were divided in two factions in the session of Congress. Namdhari Sikhs and Gurmukh Singh Chamak, Master Tara Singh, Sardool Singh Kavishar, and Baba Gurditt Singh stood with the Congress. But Baba Kharak Singh stood against it. He announced publicly that whoever would go to Congress session is not a Sikh. 70,000 to 75,000 Sikhs

who had come to Lahore from villages became double minded But Baba Gurditt Singh proclaimed publicly that one who doesn't participate in this programme is not a Sikh. Mata Jeevan Kaur managed Langar for all of them from Namdhari *Panth* as per direction of Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji. On reaching Lahore, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was led by Maharaj Nihal Singh, Mangal Singh Arshi Farishta, S. Atma Singh and S. Daya Singh and others on hundred horses in pure Namdhari dress. Here resolution of complete independence was passed unanimously. In those days Kuka Congress group too came into existence. The news and description of this session were printed in *The Satjug Weekly* which was published from Sri Bhaini Sahib (Punjab).

Thereafter struggle against British rulers intensified and government also became more vigilant. It would award prison sentences to each and every leader who spoke against the British. Bredla Hall Lahore was the centre of Congress activities. From here patriots started going to prison by passive resistance. By the encouragement of Pt Mansha Singh on the roads of Lahore the groups would sing this lyric.

-Chuck Lai Firangia Dera. Toon Kar Lia Raj Bathera.

"Get Firangi away from this country, you have already ruled a lot."

The patriotism of Namdhari Sikhs was symbol of fearlessness and sacrifice. Those who opted for revolution and patriotism to its extreme like Shaheed Bhagat Singh were impressed by Namdhari *Panth* of Satguru Ram Singh Ji. They wrote that justice was not done to this *Panth* and photos of Guru Ram Singh Ji should be distributed for encouragement. After his martyrdom in 1931, Satguru Partap Singh sent Sant Mangal Singh to console his family. He stayed there for a lot of time. He would narrate enthusiastic tales of martyrs.

To encourage the art of *Gurmat* music and wired instruments Sri Satguru Ji proposed a Sangeet Sammelan in Assu (October) carnival of 1933. In its panel of judges Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha was there and among prominent persons present were Baba Sawan Singh Radhaswami Beas, Sri Sahib Maharaj Ji Dyal Bagh Agra, Master Tara Singh, Bhai Arjan Singh Bagrian, S Joginder Singh, Dr Gokul Chand Narang and Principal Ganga Singh etc.

In the same year Sri Satguru Ji made arrangements for the tour of Thailand with disciples, preachers and *Gurbani* reciters. While camping at Kolkata, he unified two groups of Sikhs. From there reached Rangoon (Burma) now called Yangoon in Myanmar, by sea. Everybody became sentimental by having a glimpse of the bungalow where Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji was detained. Here Sikh gurudwara was locked due to differences between civilians and army. Satguru Ji resolved their differences and opened the way for the visit of Sangat to gurudwara. On reaching Chiangmai (Thailand), he was warmly welcomed with red carpet by Namdhari, non-Namdhari, Hindu and Muslims. In Bangkok, for his *darshan* and welcome leaders of all viz Singh Sabha, Hindu Maha Sabha, Sanatan Dharam, Arya Samaj, Jamaat-ul-Islam, Indian Chambers of Commerce reached there. It was led by a caravan of 100 cars.

To resolve the differences among Sikhs, His Holiness organised a *Guru Nanak Naam Leva Conference*. All sects of Sikhs were invited in the conference at Sri Bhaini Sahib on 14-15 October 1934. In which some of those put a condition that they would not come if ardas-prayer of 12 Gurus is performed. Sri Satguru Ji granted permission for prayers of 10 Gurus for the sake of unity. In the conference Bhai Arjan Singh Bagrian used to perform the

prayer. However the prayer at the time of Asa Di Vaar continued to be of 12 Gurus as per Namdhari discipline. In this conference leaders of all the sects (Mandals, Panths, Sabhas, Takhts) following Guru Nanak Dev reached and it was decided that Gurbani's preaching must be done, Everybody's way of preaching must be affirmative not denial and criticising other sect. Unity must be there, if there were law suits, those must be decided by sitting together across the table. An executive committee was formed and Gurmukh Singh Musafir was designated as its convener. The next session of conference took place at Gujranwala on 19 to 22-April-1935. In the same year it was ordered by Sri Satguru Ji to solemnise the weddings of young couples during carnivals only.

Satjug's special Basant issue of 1936 and Sant Khalsa poetry book were confiscated for presenting Namdhari history correctly and being not in favour of government.

Elections were held in all the provinces of the country in 1937. The Namdhari Sikhs voted as per direction of Satguru Ji. However after election results, according to the situation, decision was taken to support Congress in the freedom struggle. There was difference of opinion that at the time of marriage whether wedding couple should move in clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. It was ordered that moving around in anti clockwise manner was logical and correct.

In the same year, Punjab government sent a recommendation to establish a commercialised slaughter house to central government. There over 1000 animals were to be slaughtered daily.

To stop it, Sri Satguru Ji used spiritual power. 500 men were told to do a continuous *Hawwan-Yag* of *Chandi-di-Vaar* from 9 to 18 -September 1937 at Sri Bhaini Sahib.

The ghee was flowing down altar like a stream. *Sadh Sangat* did 1,27,000 readings of Chandi Di Vaar in complete *Maryada*. Naturally its heat reached the government too. The government was aware of the nature of Namdhari Sikhs about being sages as well as warriors. So it declared not to open the abattoir. *Sadh Sangat* celebrated it.

On the incitement of Britishers the Muslims initiated scuffle of Shaheed Gunj Lahore. In which all Namdhari Sikhs were ordered to stand with *panth*. The elections of Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee were due in January 1938. It was published in *Satjug* for compromise among candidates of constituencies, but if it could not be possible then to help, in every respect, so as to ensure victory of Akali Party candidates.

State People's conference was conducted at Ludhiana on 17 February 1939. In it Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was led by Sri Satguru Ji on horse in the procession. Master Tara Singh, Dr. Saifuddin Kichlu, Pattabhi Sitaramiah etc. participated enthusiastically. To make this conference a success, Namdhari Sikhs were very active. Next day all leaders visited Sri Bhaini Sahib on invitation of Sri Satguru Ji. Here S. Atma Singh, Sant Nidhan Singh Aalim, S Daya Singh, Sant Inder Singh Chakarvarty etc. led them. They were informed in an effective manner about historical places viz *Kranti Mandar, Loh Langar, Akal Bunga* etc and Namdhari history. Jawaharlal Nehru and many others had a sigh on government atrocities. A welcome meeting was organised in which Alaim Ji read out the letter of honour.

World War - II had begun, Sri Satguru Ji ordered all Namdhari Sikhs neither to get recruited in army and nor to help government in any other way.

Government had begun a conspiracy to detain patriot leaders. S Teja Singh Sutantar, Sohan Singh Josh, Ratan Singh, Kishan Singh, Master Mota Singh etc. used

to take help and asylum from Sri Satguru Ji while in hiding.

Neta Ji Subhash Chandra Bose went to Japan in hiding. He created Azad Hind Fauz (Indian National Army). When he made Thailand (Siam) as the centre then Seth Gurbaksh Singh Pritam son of Seth Phoola Singh shouldered the responsibility as the supply secretary, Seth Tarlok Singh remained his driver.

During 1942, nation was undergoing ideological changes. Mahatma Gandhi gave the slogan 'British Quit India'.

Sri Satguru Ji scheduled a conference at Shimla to discuss about developments of mother tongue Punjabi. Bhai Arjan Singh Bagrian was designated as its president and Abdul Majid secretary. The resolutions, for Punjabi broadcast from Delhi and Lahore radio stations and implementation of teaching of Punjabi up to university level, were passed in it. On 9 March 1943 Mata Jeevan Kaur went for her heavenly abode. Each and every eye was wet in her memory.

On the occasion of Hola 1943, on 20 March Sri Satguru Ji organised a Hindu-Sikh reconciliation conference. In which harmony, cow-protection, use of swadeshi goods were considered as the main themes.

It seemed that after World War - II Britishers would quit India. That is why the demand for partition was also picking up by Muslim Community. Viceroy Lord Wavell called for a meeting of Congress, Muslim League, Akali Dal and other political parties on 25th June 1945 to find its positive solution. Sri Satguru Ji stayed at the residence of Sant Jaswant Singh to watch and analyse the situation. He was standing in the balcony at that time, it started drizzling. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad took shelter there. They expressed their concern about partition and wanted to know about the desire of Satguru

Ji. Satguru Ji said, "I'll sign on blank paper, we don't need anything else. Just nation should attain independence." They were very happy to hear this.

Sri Satguru Ji's foresightedness sensed the delicate situation that partition was going to take place. *Majha* would be partitioned. He thought to buy the land in Teshil Sirsa District Hissar for the Sikhs, which has been seen while going from Punjab to Rajasthan. On collection of Rs 5500 per *Murabba* (25 Acres) from Sikhs, assigned the responsibility to maintain accounts to Baba Ji (Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji) and Master Balwant Singh. 12,430 acre land of village Chuchal kotli (Jeevan Nagar), Jag Malera(Sant Nagar), Alipur (Haripur), Kanjran Wala (Damdama)... was bought.

On Hola festival of Shekhupura Bedad in 1947 His Holiness ordered Sikhs to cross at least river Ravi. By considering that Sikhs to remain diligent, went to each and every village, city, sent Baba Ji (Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji) to tell Sikhs to give up the attachment of home and those who abided by the order did not get a scratch during partition of 1947. They thanked Sri Satguru Ji for protecting them. On coming to this side, they started tending for their family and for work.

REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY

Whereas 15 August 1947 brought independence for India, it brought devastation for millions of Indians, especially for Punjabis and Bengalis. It is the people who suffer and pay a huge price whenever there is change of guard. Muslims had to go to Pakistan and Hindu-Sikhs had to come to India. Pakistan was carved out of India. Movement of the people did not happen smoothly. Some anti-social elements plundered, dishonoured and damaged life and property.

To protect his disciples from this holocaust, Sri Satguru Ji had already ordered on Holi-1947 held at Shekhupura Bedad, Gujranwala district, that it would be safer if they could cross river Beas. At least they must cross Ravi. He went himself or sent Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji to Layalpur, Montgomery, Lahore districts etc. so that the Sikhs might leave with kids, family and essential articles. Those who obeyed escaped from the loss of life and property. Rest barely managed to escape clutches of death. Some could not even save themselves.

Expressing his apprehensions about loss in future, Satguru Ji insisted on Mahatma Gandhi at Balmiki temple, Delhi to use his good office to avoid partition. The later, expressed in casualness and replied that all loss of life and property would be made up. Satguru said again furiously, "If someone dishonours those women on whose shoulders you walk, How their honour would be saved?"

Mahatama became quiet by saying, "Yeah this is right".

Sri Satguru Ji had already bought the land in Jeevan Nagar area, district Hissar (now Sirsa) for rehabilitation of Sikhs. After getting registration done, he conducted 101 Akhand Path at Sri Jeevan Nagar (Chuchal Kotli) before partition. The Sikhs started settling there, community kitchen and Langar was set up, and meditation process began to take place. Its impact began to fall on nearby villages of Bagri Hindus and Muslims, But Kalyug had stepped in even before enjoying the benefits of this land. Regarding this, during Basant Carnival at Lahore in 1947, Baba Jaimal Singh of Manga (Tamboli ka khuh) forwarded the request to Sri Satguru Ji, as had been said by The Gobind -Almighty God, "These Sikhs will quarrel among themselves, will also take on you adversely, Gobind says it to me." Sri Satguru Ji said, "We'll face when it comes". After end of chaos Satguru Ji single mindedly supported and consoled the Sikhs.

Satguru Ji made arrangement for food and clothings at Amritsar, Sri Bhaini Sahib, and Sri Jeevan Nagar. He advised the Sikhs to be cautious from Muslims and maintain harmony with Hindus. Government of India had carried out a districtwise rehabilitation for those Punjabis who arrived in India from Pakistan. However Sri Satguru Ji got permission by asking Sh. Mohinder Singh Randhawa chief of rehabilitation department for all Namdharis to settle down in district Hissar. If someone wanted to settle down somewhere else he was free to do so. That's why some families settled down at Mandi (Himachal Pradesh), Jammu or other places. Some even went to Patna (Bihar) and Thailand. Along with rehabilitation of everybody, Sri Satguru Ji's concern included those families also, who could not manage to come from Pakistan. On 28 April 1950, by saying, "Our 20,000

daughters are still there." He wished to bring them back to India.

Famous patriot and leader of Gadar Party Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna has written about contribution of Namdhari Sikhs to the independence struggle and said. "Placed the sacrifices of Namdharis for independence in a pan of weighing scale and place rest of India's in other. If they don't have an upper hand, they shall not be lighter."

Walking down through thick and thin, pain and pleasure of independence and partition the Namdhari Sikhs started standing on their own. As majority of Namdhari Sikhs were in the area of Sri Jeevan Nagar. So Sri Satguru Ji made arrangements for regular meditation in terms of organising Holas of 1948, 1949, 1954, and 1955 in the same area at Sant Nagar or Nakaura village. Meditation strengthened Namdharis spiritually. Where ever he went he encouraged *sangat* for the support and help of these people. Peasants were given their due share of land and non-peasant poor Sikhs were given land free of cost. Those landless tillers, who were troubled by landlords in Pakistan, were allotted land in village Pratap Nagar and Santanwali. The claims of land from Pakistan were also settled. After independence Prime Minister and Ministers of Union Government, Chief Ministers and Ministers of states were amongst the indians. When the ministers like Partap Singh Kairon, went to see Namdhari Sikhs (He) had even said, "O Kukas ! you are absolutely right, this pen is yours."

Pandit Nehru and other political leaders used to respect and regard Sri Satguru Ji because of his lofty character, spiritual personality and creator of glorious history. The Central government formed a cow protection committee. Among those 10 members, Sri Satguru Ji was also designated after taking his due permission. On the

occasion of prize distribution in a cattle show in 1952, President of India, Dr Rajendra Prasad said, "If someone wants to learn cow breeding, learn from Maharaj Partap Singh."

According to the constitution of India, a democratic process started when first elections were held in 1952. In which Sant Atma Singh of Rawalpindi, on the direction of Sri Satguru Ji, contested for membership of Lok Sabha and won from Sirsa constituency on the ticket of Congress party. In Rajya Sabha, Maharaj Nihal Singh was nominated and S Teja Singh was made a member of Legislative Council of Punjab. Although Sri Satguru Ji was not directly involved in electing government, yet it was his desire that the Congress candidates who wins with Namdhari votes must be impartial, well wisher of people, patriot and freedom fighters.

When Congress allocated candidature to some other type of persons violating norms laid down by Satguru then later ensured that such candidates be defeated. That's why Devi Lal lost the election of Legislative Assembly from Sirsa constituency. Its effect on entire Congress was rather contrary. Its disposition did not remain as courteous towards Sri Satguru Ji and Namdhari Sikhs as it used to be earlier. It tried its level best to divide Guru family and Sikhs of the Sri Jeevan Nagar area; and was successful up to some extent to turn a few away. Despite this, the organisation did not split, though a crack did develop.

In Sri Jeevan Nagar area, Sri Satguru Ji allocated due share of land to each landlord. In this exercise the allocation of land claims and allotment was also included. On the direction of Sri Satguru Ji, to avail the claims of Sikhs S. Teja Singh, Avtar Singh Jhabbar Kariwala, Karam Singh Patwari maintained liaison with the head of rehabilitation department at Jalandhar. As a

result, without much cost and hassle, the land of Namdhari Sikhs was allotted in Sri Jiwan Nagar area. For allotment Sri Satguru Ji got technical help from Sardool Singh and Mange Ram Patwari and allotment was done accurately.

People of village Kariwala got the allocation done by the government authorities. As a result eastern population was allocated land towards west and western population was allocated land towards east. They had to go in opposite directions for tillage and caring of crops in their farms. On one hand Sri Satguru Ji advised them to be on the path of religion and patience, on the other hand he graced Sikhs living in different parts of the world by allowing them to have his *darshan*.

He blessed Namdhari Sikhs of Bangkok, Thailand on Holi 1950. Although his Holi visits were scheduled on 4-5 March, but Sri Satguru Ji had blessed them alongwith his sons and disciples on 22 February 1950. By narrating the life stories of faithful and patient Sikhs, Satguru Ji preached Sikhs to keep high moral character. He had already blessed *sangat* in November-December 1948 also.

In the religious discourse on 9 February 1951 at Bangkok, he talked about the devastation of the people of India which was done by the floods and drought. "They don't have anything to eat, don't have clothings to wear, animals do not get fodder. If you take pity on them (by sending money) and help them, Satguru shall help you even more."

In Thailand (Bangkok) the Namdhari *sangat* had settled since beginning of 20th century. Namdhari Sikhs were becoming affluent by working hard. Their population was also growing. To keep the garden of Sikhism green, Sri Satguru Ji used to water it by giving *darshan* from time to time since 1933.

Since fourth decade of 20th century, some saplings of Sikhism were planted in Africa too. By the grace of Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji, Suba Lal Singh went there. On the request of his son Chanan Singh and other Sikhs, Sri Satguru Ji toured Africa with associates and disciples in April-May 1953. After staying in Bombay for a few days and preaching meditation of *Naam* he, toured cities of East Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, Tanganyika. Prominent cities were Mumbasa, Karicho, Kasumo, Nakoro, Aldorate, Magadhi, Jinja, Kampala, Mubali, Aroosha, Moshi, Nairobi etc. To have his *darshan* or to listen scriptures recitation, religious anecdotes, devout Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims would come in big numbers. They enjoyed the sweetness of devotional *Kirtan* of Sant Darshan Singh-Khazan Singh accompanying Sri Satguru Ji. They got impressed by speeches and *Kirtan* of Sant Nidhan Singh Alam. They enjoyed the narrative speech of Pt Gopal Singh. Sri Satguru Ji had his own arrangements for food stuff (bread and butter); nothing used to be eaten from any meat-eater household. If someone promised to give up liquor and non-vegetarian food, got him baptised then all would eat in that house. In every city many Sikhs became disciples of Sri Satguru Ji. Suba Dasaundha Singh and Pritam Singh of Paddi were left there for preaching and Sri Satguru Ji returned to India by air in mid May. While taking off (from India to Africa) a few Sikhs went by sea, so they returned likewise. Sri Satguru Ji fulfilled the desire of Sikhs of Africa in giving *darshan* again from 14 November to 24 December 1953

Even though Sri Satguru Ji toured to preach Sikhism, he blessed the mammoth gatherings of Holi at Sri Bhaini Sahib Ludhiana (Punjab), Mandi (Himachal Pradesh), Tahla Sahib (Mansa- Punjab), but made Sri Jeevan Nagar only the centre. However, he was worried about some selfish

persons who were brewing resentment in the hearts of simple people. Ghasita Singh who was once a leader among Namdharis, and a staunch follower of Satguru Ji turned out an opponent. The faith of Labh Singh Kakka had also stumbled. This happened due to the ill-designs of politicians. Consequently Jawahar Lal Nehru and Partap Singh Kairon did not keep their relation and respect towards Sri Satguru Ji same as before. S Atma Singh M.P. expired on 7 January, 1954. The Congress party contested this seat on its own accord, without seeking Sri Satguru Ji's advice.

Regarding Beer Bhamarasi, (Nabha) which was presented to Sri Satguru Ji by Maharaja of Nabha, the rulers of PEPSU refused to recognise Namdhari Sikhs' possession on it. Herds were let loose there to feed and an auction was ordered. Although Chief Ministers kept on changing from Raghubir Singh to Gian Singh Rarewala till Brishbhan, but the attitude of government remained negative. A case had to be registered in civil court of Fatehgarh with the help of Sri Satguru Ji. Auction was cancelled by the order of Judge on 30 May 1955. Final ruling was awarded at Kapurthala in favour of Namdhari Sikhs on 14 June 1956. In this suit the statement of Maharani Sarojini Devi Nabha was very important. Land and other presents were given to Sri Satguru Ji on the occasion of birth of a male child to the Maharani.

Labh Singh Kakka was murdered in 1955 in Sri Jeevan Nagar area due to factionalism. The needle of suspicion was on Kandhara Singh, but he was acquitted by the court.

In second general elections of India in 1957 a non-Congress candidate was elected as MLA from Sirsa constituency with the support of Namdhari Sikhs who voted for him as wished by Sri Satguru Ji. Here, on the

one hand, the power of Sri Satguru Ji's order was exhibited; on the other hand factionalism escalated. Anti-Guru faction used Ghasita Singh as the weapon. Once Sri Satguru Ji treated him among his confidants, now the same had estranged his relations with Sri Satguru Ji. Sri Satguru Ji had allocated the land accurately. Accordingly, land was transferred, if needed. Despite this transfer, throwing the papers in the dust bin and considering that government workers were on his side, Ghasita Singh Harni went on to till the land at Sant Nagar on 20 May 1958; eventually to get possession by force from Bhagat Hazara Singh and Santokh Singh. However by the instructions of Sri Satguru Ji Sikh Sangat sat in the arable land with rosaries in their hands, and he just left repenting. As a result of factionalism Ghasita Singh was murdered on 21 July 1958. The needle of suspicion pointed at towards Kandhara Singh, but the murder case was filed against Avtar Singh, Amar Singh, Gurdip Singh, besides Baba (Maharaj) Bir Singh.

Present-Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji approached Jawaharlal Nehru and Partap Singh Kairon to withdraw the name of his innocent younger brother Baba Bir Singh from the case, but they turned a deaf ear. Maharaj Ji had to present himself at court in Sirsa on 11 August 1958. He was arrested. He was detained for 8 months in prisons of Sirsa or Ferozepur and was released on 29 April 1959. Only sky was the limit to the joy of *Sadh Sangat*. They were happy. Sri Satguru Ji had a sigh of relief. Of the rest, Kandhara Singh was sentenced to death by hanging and other 3 had life imprisonment. Maharaj Ji expressed his gratitude towards Sangat by writing, "By over looking my weaknesses, the meditation, prayers which *Sadh Sangat* had carried out for my release can not be counted. I can't repay it."

Although evil was defeated in this case, yet

authorities did not accept this defeat. They just wanted to bring Sri Satguru Ji to his knees; wanted to spread the web for this purpose. Like every ruler it was using undue brute force. The government felt too proud of its momentary power over Sri Satguru Ji. 14 civil cases were filed against Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji. The heart of entire Namdhari Panth bled over it. Complainants knew that cases were false even then they wanted Sri Satguru Ji to be produced in the court. Anti-symbolists did not want any lawyer or representative to represent Sri Satguru Ji. They declared a date for himself to be present and give statement. Sri Satguru Ji had decided not to present himself in an errant court. From time to time he began indicating about the personality who would lead Namdhari Sikhs after him :

On 26 Vaisakh 2016 (May 1959), told representatives and workers of monastery,

"From today onwards, whosoever wants to be under the order of Jagjit Singh, live here, others may go back to the places from wherever they have come." (-Jass Jeevan Part 6)

On 27 Vaisakh 2016 at Sirsa, when Sri Satguru Ji was asked by the Sikhs regarding Gurudwara elections, then he said, "Ask elder son."

At Sri Bhaini Sahib, when he was not keeping well. He said to Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji, "Son, the Paths (Scripture readings) which have been initiated for *darshan* of Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji, must be completed, even if everything has to be sold." -Jass Jeevan part 6

(Similar words are recorded in the books of Inder Singh Chakarvarty and Pritam Singh Kavi viz. *Atal Partapi* and *Beete Diyan Pairan* respectively).

Satguru Partap Singh Ji departed from this world early morning at 12:30 on 22 August 1959, couple of days before the date of being present in court. It became pitch dark for Sikh *Sangat*; it appeared as if lightening had struck. They began wailing and crying their heart out. He was cremated in the evening. Every one 's eyes were wet.

Next day 23 August 1959, early morning during Asa Di Vaar, Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji began enlightening Namdhari world, seating on the *Gurgaddi*. First Maharaj Nihal Singh, Baba Jang Singh, Sant Inder Singh Chakarvarty, Bhai Wazir Singh, Sant Ratan Singh bowed to His Holiness and then rest of *Sangat* followed.

On 10 September 1959 at concluding ceremony in memory of Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji, a big carnival was organised. In which large number of religious, political, social leaders, representatives of newspapers and Sikh *Sangat* joined. On this day, in words of Maharaj Bir Singh, "Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji was presented a turban (robe of honour) from Namdhari *Sangat* by Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji's close follower Bhai Wazir Singh Ji." — Namdhari and Congress.

Turbans (robe of Honour) were placed before Sri Satguru Ji by prominent organisations and sects such as: Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, Radhaswami, Beas and Agra, Sanatan Dharam Sabha, Nirmal Maha Mandal, Udaseen Maha Mandal, Sewa Panthi, Addan Shahi. Prominent persons were Bhai Sahib Bhai Ardaman Singh Bagrian, Giani Zail Singh Maharaja Patiala, Gian Singh Rarewala, Lala Hardev Sahai, JN Mankar, S Bhagwant Singh Hari, Families of Ghumanda etc. panchayats having faith and reverence towards Guru. After tying the turban. His Holiness stood up and gave *darshan*. The gathering of *Sadh Sangat* paid their respects

from their respective seats with great zeal and enthusiasm.

On 10 September 1959, in the gathering of *Sadh Sangat* gathered in honour of Sri Satguru Ji, notable persons paid homage to Satguru Partap Singh Ji and expressed their gratitude towards Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji and congratulated him on being seated on *Gurgaddi*. Master Tara Singh's words were, "Now I congratulate Baba Jagjit Singh Ji and pray that may God bless him so that the prosperity remains intact." S Swaran Singh said, "I am hopeful that Maharaj Jagjit Singh Ji will work for nation and community in the same manner as previous Maharaj used to do." Giani Zail Singh's respectful words were, "Today congratulating Maharaj Jagjit Singh Ji, I'll request that this seat is not only for sages, holy men, but a seat that had brought a revolution in India. This seat had created ripples of revolution. Maharaj Jagjit Singh Ji your responsibilities have increased, In all dangers you have to lead and protect."

The words of Pt Yagdutt Sharma were, "I offer my floral tributes to that soul, who has maintained his dignity and grandeur in Maharaj Jagjit Singh Ji."

The saying of Bhai Ardaman Singh Bagrian was, "I expect that Maharaj Jagjit Singh Ji will fulfil the vacuum created by the demise of spiritual power of Maharaj Partap Singh Ji."

Maharaj Kirpal Singh Radhaswami said, "I have deep respect for him (Satguru Partap Singh Ji) and I am happy that encouragement of Maharaj's life will also go to Baba Jagjit Singh Ji."

Sh JN Manker and Lala Hardev Sahai expressed the hope for protection, affection for cow from Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji.

For the followers the same soul had reappeared, but in a different body. The beginning of welfare had already taken place, to get rid of disease and mourning. They expressed their faith in Sri Satguru Ji.

12 years since independence, despite changing political and social scenario, the Namdhari Sikhs managed to stand on their own feet with the auspicious support and guidance of Satguru Ji. Their settlements were not only in different villages and cities of India, but in the countries of East Africa and Thailand also. Satguru Partap Singh Ji had blessed the *sangat* of these areas till 1959. He organised last Hola at Kampala (Uganda) in 1959. They had started looking for new horizons for their progress.

CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION

The condition, under which Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji had to leave for heavenly abode, had brought depression and dejection in the minds of dedicated Sikhs. They were compelled to think how will-sect (*Panth*) emerge out of this difficult situation which was created by some naive Sikhs instigated by others. How will Satguru Ji resolve this crisis.

By looking at sad faces of Sikhs, Satguru Ji could understand their mental state of concern, worry and dejection. How difficult was it for him to bring spring in the garden of *Panth* again. First of all he invited writers to bring awareness and consciousness among them. He told in first public address during 3rd All India Writers Conference at Ludhiana on 3 October 1959 :

"The writers have a very sincere responsibility – They educate people, impart knowledge to them and encourage them to a great extent. They develop such sort of literature, by using which moral character of a common man can improve. Courage could flow through weak, feeble and down trodden; So that our nation can progress and its respect among other countries too increases."

This direction was for Namdhari writers also. At that time Inder Singh Chakarvarty, Taran Singh Vahimi, Mangal Singh Layalpuri, Pritam Singh Kavi, Bishan Singh Historian and Amar Bharti were among the prominent Namdhari authors. Kavi Ji was editor of Satjug and Bharti

• Ji and Loyalpuri Ji of Nawan Hindustan. Rest were independent writers.

False cases were dying their own death due to meditation, politeness, firmness, foresightedness and patience of Satguru Ji. At a Punjabi function on 8 to 10 September 1964, by showing kindness, and forgiveness he announced that all the inadvertent Sikhs were pardoned. This *soothed* the hearts of those who were misguided. Sadh Sangat's hearts thrilled with joy and their quench of Sri Satguru Ji's *Darshan* was satisfied. Visits of Sri Satguru Ji in Hola at different places viz. Sri Ganga Nagar, Sri Bhaini Sahib, Baja Khana Sant Nagar, in other places of Rajsthan and Punjab, on Kumbh festival of Vaisakhi 1962 at Hardwar (U.P.) enlightened the people. On these occasions, people would embrace Sikhism. Lectures of Pt. Gopal Singh used to be very effective in this regard.

There was a U-turn in the attitude of leaders in political circle also. Once while returning from Ludhiana to Sri Bhaini Sahib with his followers and assistants by car Satguru Ji saw about 3 cars were parked by the road side near Jamalpur. He halted to lend a helping hand, if there was any problem with those cars. However nearby from millet fields, Partap Singh Kairon Chief Minister Punjab emerged. He was returning after answering the nature's call. He came towards Sri Satguru Ji and expressed his regards by bowing down; and said you would have not come to meet. Sri Satguru Ji said, "One can meet if only situation is conducive to meet". Then he visited Chandigarh on the invitation of Kairon. From the conversation there, Kairon realised that injustice was being done to Namdhari Sikhs. He repented for those excesses. Abiding by the order of Sri Satguru Ji, he visited Baja Khana (Faridkot) on 24 March 1962 on Hola Mohalla and Sri Jeevan Nagar on 13 June 1962 in

animal exhibition to bring an end to the differences and he said so in appropriate words.

Due to heavy rains in the mountains, river Ghaghar passing through Sri Jeevan Nagar area was flooded. People of different villages were standing on the embankment on both sides, so that there should not be any losses if it breaches. To keep them in high spirits Sri Satguru Ji visited the embankment, and advised them to raise embankment by piling earth on it. As a result of this, the bitterness of fear that might have had may deliberately breach the embankment, ceased in the hearts of those who were standing on the embankment to secure it and no one breached it rather strengthened it.

On the occasion of Hola at Sant Nagar (Sirsa) in 1963, in the presence of Minister of Central Government Ram Subhag Singh, S. Teja Singh (of Khuh Amritsarian area, Sri Jeevan Nagar) expressed that the law suits filed against Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji and persons of his flank by him and his associates were false. Those were filed out of envy, enmity and to revenge. They repented that act now. With this air was clarified further. Sikhs who had come from all over the world on Hola had a sigh of relief.

In June 1963, a simpleton village Khote District Firozepur (now Moga) came in the reach of world press headlines and media. Here Anand Karaj centenary was celebrated on 3rd June. Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji had initiated *Gurmat Anand Maryada* in this village 100 years ago. He organised without dowry, for the first time, inter-caste mass marriages of 6 couples. The couples after having head to toe bath were administered Amrit, circumbulated around fire altar four times; by reading *Lavan* from Sri Adi Granth Sahib the marriage ceremony

was solemnised. On this centenary celebration Sri Satguru Ji solemnised 149 Marriages simultaneously with same *Maryada*. The act was praised throughout the world.

During these days the relations of Namdhari Sikhs were strengthened with the new ruler of Kenya. Kenya became independent and Jomo Kaniata became its first Prime Minister. Sri Satguru Ji sent best wishes through a letter on 9 January 1963.

During tour of 1959, Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji had anticipated that Kenya would be independent within 10 years. Regarding this Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji's following words were published on 16 May 1962 by East African Standard newspaper. "They are expecting that African people would achieve the goal of independency by my next visit," It was perceived that blessings only had borne fruits. He had toured Kenya and Uganda in April-May 1962. Although the benefits of Sri Satguru Ji's *darshan* were being already bestowed on Sangat and people of Thailand, Japan and Hong Kong. In the coming years 1963-64 also, Namdhari Sikhs of Thailand, East African countries viz Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania accorded red carpet welcome to Sri Satguru Ji.

The political leaders of India had a feeling of regard towards Namdhari Sikhs and Sri Satguru Ji, due to their association with freedom struggle. So they felt proud on attending their functions. Full cooperation was extended to government in building up the nation. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Gulzari Lal Nanda specially came on the Basant carnival celebrated under the auspicious presence of Sri Satguru Ji at Delhi in 1964.

On the demise of Jawaharlal Nehru on 27 May 1964, when Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri was elected as Prime Minister, Sri Satguru Ji gave message for help to

Shastri Ji by leaving aside all worries, problems and regional thinking.

The Namdhari Sikhs are not only cow protectors but cow breeder also. Their cows were healthy and capable of giving more milk due to being attended to so carefully. At Sri Bhaini Sahib besides the stables and Gaushalas (Charitable home for cows) were also there. They participated in animal exhibitions from time to time. In the competitions of 1962 organised by central council of cow wealth (Samvardhan) (Government of India), first rank was won by a cow reared in Namdhari cow barn named Putli of Sahiwal breed by yielding 21 Kg milk daily and second place was won by the cow Naulakhi by yielding 20 Kg milk. As Putli gave more milk than any other cow, Sri Satguru Ji was conferred **Gopal Ratan** medal on 23 March 1965 by Government of India. This cow wealth conference (Go Samvardhan Sammelan) was held at Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh) from 21 to 23 March 1965 in which government and non-government organisations participated. On first day, Chief Minister of the state K Brahma Reddy welcomed thousands of guests. Central Agricultural and Food Minister, C Subramaniam delivered a speech about caring of cow breeds. This conference was inaugurated by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. Putli won first rank by yielding 62 pounds milk.

During the same year, daily newspaper of Namdhari Sikhs Nawan Hindustan created its special place in Journalism. This paper was earlier weekly and was now made daily in 1962.

Satjug was a weekly like any other time. Its operational area was religious, social and literary. It was mouthpiece of activities of Namdhari Sikhs. *Nawan Hindustan* had a special place in the entire political, social and religious circles especially because of editorials of

Layalpuri or Bharti Ji; although both used to follow the strategy guided by Sri Satguru Ji.

Although the preaching and practice concerning mediation and *Rahit Maryada* of Namdhari Sikhs was continuing, still realising the need to organise Namdhari youth, Sri Satguru Ji blessed them with personal touch. He called for their gathering on 1 September 1962. Secretary Gurdev Singh wrote letters especially as per direction. More important meetings were not held after this gathering. However in 1964 a meeting was held at Mandi, Subsequently the following year from 29 May to 6 June a convention was held in auspicious presence of His Holiness. Thus it started rolling with zeal and enthusiasm.

In early sixties, activities of Namdhari Sikhs increased in another field. That was peace movement. Though Namdhari Sikhs have always remained peace-loving, but in these years their activities towards peace grew to regional, national and international level. Sri Satguru Ji consented to be the President of Haryana branch of World Peace Council. Its meaningful conventions were held in Japan, Pakistan, Finland etc. In India conventions were held at Amritsar, Hyderabad, and Delhi etc.

At Delhi, the convention was held during Namdhari \ Hola Mahalla of 1966, it was attended by President of Council Isabul Baluma, Secretary Ramesh, Chairman of Gandhi Peace Council Dr RR Diwakar, US ambassador Chester Bowles and Aruna Asaf Ali. During Vietnam War, the activities of this council increased for world peace. Gathering held at Helsinki (Finland) had special importance.

Pure, clean, virtuous, and vegetarian food has been the only permitted food of saints, meditators and entire Namdhari Panth. It led towards animal protection and

animal welfare. When some other intellectual people organised conventions to create awareness about it, then Namdhari Sikhs participated actively by considering it as their own responsibility. Sri Satguru Ji provided leadership to international Vegetarian organisation. Offered feast and remained active in the congregations.

In the 2nd half of sixties, some Namdhari families settled down in England from East Africa. They developed their reputation and got into work with their *Bani*, code of dress, turban and speech.

After the tour of Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia in 1966, Sri Satguru Ji gave *darshan* to the *Sadh Sangat* of UK on 27 August 1967. This was his first tour of western countries. He went to West Germany and Denmark to visit animal exhibitions. Here by looking carefully on a cow, he told about the milk yield of that cow. The organisers were surprised to see that the estimate was absolutely correct. For them it was no less than a miracle by a spiritual power. There was a soothing discussion. Their good feelings towards Namdhari Sikhs increased because of being his disciples.

In 1971, the centenary of Hola by Guru Ram Singh Ji at Anandpur was celebrated. To mark their presence in it, Akali leader of Punjab, Prakash Singh Badal Chief Minister joined especially. This was the centenary year of Namdhari Sikhs martyred at Raikot, Amritsar, and Ludhiana also. Commemorations of these centenaries were started since Hola itself.

Next year was the year of action packed centenaries. It was a year of centenary of Martyrs of Malerkotla, centenary of Sri Satguru Ji's exile. To commemorate these, centenaries a monthly *Shatabadi News* paper was published by Sh. Harvendra Singh Hanspal as its editor. Articles were got published by

contacting entire press; and different gatherings were organised. At Wolverhampton (UK), in Broadway Hall (Ealing) memorial convention was held under patronage of Sri Satguru Ji. In which mayor of Wolverhampton welcomed Sri Satguru Ji. Research base material was developed and disseminated.

In this year Hola Mahalla was held at 2 places. One was at Jagjit Nagar (Sirsa) and other one in Bangkok (Thailand), at the flats of Seth Piara Singh Narula. Besides others, its objective was to reveal the anecdotes, tales, fame of Guru Ram Singh Ji at many more places.

In 1973 Sri Satguru Ji blessed to start the Kar-sewa (cleaning of pond from mud) of Harimandar Sahib (Amritsar) with followers.

Since the 60s, the inclination of Namdhari Sikhs towards education had increased. Their children started working for school-colleges. Sri Satguru Ji has organised them into Vidyak Jathas; the conventions of which were held outside Punjab at Mandi (Himachal Pradesh), Delhi, Daltongunj (Bihar) and Jammu etc.

The Family of Seth Jodh Singh of Daltangunj themselves opened schools, colleges etc. Sant Jodh Singh started a girls school which started working as college by 1968. In 1974 Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Namdhari College and then Balwant Singh Namdhari College at district Palamu were established.

In 1975, death centenary of Suba Sahib Singh in prison of Hazaribagh, Bihar (now Jharkhand) was commemorated. Information based literature about him was printed and disseminated. A carnival was organised.

The sequence of continuous association with vegetarian convention was in progress. By the auspicious guidance of Sri Satguru Ji the Namdhari Sikhs were active in one of the local vegetarian organisations in England.

This organisation was not only vegetarian but preached and advocated about crops that were produced without chemical fertilisers. Sri Satguru Ji also forbade usage of chemical fertilisers in the fields. Participations were held in the vegetarian conventions of Hague (Holland) in 1971, Sweden in 73, Sri Lanka and Chicago (US) in 75. Organisation held congregation in India after every 10 years viz. 1957, 1967, 1977, etc. After associating with this organisation a feast used to be given from Sri Satguru Ji. Peace ambassador of Thailand, Dr Suchat came to Sri Bhaini Sahib on 25 November 1977. He came to present golden emblem, books, rosaries etc from King of Thailand to the auspicious leader of peace and vegetarianism, Sri Satguru Ji. In the same year General Secretary of Indian Vegetarian Congress Surinder Mehta with representative of Nigeria reached for his *darshan*. Prior to that from 20 to 23 November 1976, 24th World Vegetarian Convention had been held at Vigyan Bhawan, Delhi, in which delegates of over 50 countries participated. They expressed gratitude towards Sri Satguru Ji.

In 1976 the blessings of Satguru Ji resulted in a miracle. The drought ridden U.K. got rainfall. This created deep faith towards Sri Satguru Ji and respect towards Namdhari Sikhs all over the world. The news papers highlighted Satguru Ji as the 'Rain God' or Rain Maker.

A statement of Water Chief Denis Howard was published in a newspaper of England dated 26 August 1976. He said that it was the worst ever drought in England and Wales in last 500 years. The following day on 27 August, Chairman National Water Council Lord Nuscent said that there was not any chance of rain till September, water level of river Thames was touching new low. Restrictions were imposed on water usage.

Sri Satguru Ji reached England on 8th August 1976 on tour. He was welcomed by many organisations in Slough. Dr Rahordan Lato – President International Vegetarian Society, Former Mayor of Slough, leader of council, leaders of Indian league, Akali Dal and Namdhari Sangat were included among those who welcomed Satguru Ji. Sri Satguru Ji was honoured by a joint organisation of Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and Jews, inter-faith groups of Wolverhampton. He reached Southall on 26 August. *Naam-Simran* and *Kirtan* was organised here at Mangat hall. Hall owner maliciously made a stir of the news in BBC TV, radio etc. that Namdhari Satguru Ji had come to England to make rain fall.

The Namdhari Sikhs were worried, that if it did not rain they would become a laughing stock. They requested about it to Satguru Ji. He said that it was within the reach of Almighty. By thawing with their humility and docility, by conducting the *Ardas* through Pandit Gopal Singh on 27 August 1976, was pleased and the miracle did happen. By denying all the forecasts, flooded it by making it rain in cats and dogs. It soothed the hearts of Sikhs. Evening newspapers of 27 August and morning newspapers of 28 August, Saturday, praised Sri Satguru Ji a lot, applauded through highlights, news and photos.

In the same year, Sri Satguru Ji started the *Kar Sewa* from Ramsar in order to give a face lift to Sri Bhaini Sahib.

Namdhari artists started a new revolution in the field of music. For its teaching and practice, Sri Satguru Ji made Namdhari children students of expert musicians. S Gurdev Singh and Harbhajan Singh Ustad were among students of Pyara Singh Tarshehnai and others of Ustad Amjad Ali Khan. Ustad Amjad Ali Khan had

darshan of Sri Satguru Ji in 1966. Besides this, they got training of playing Santoor, Sitar, Sarod, Tabla, Flute and dance etc from Pandit Shiv Kumar, Ustad Vilyat Khan, Pandit Ram Narain, Pandit Kishan Maharaj, Imrat Khan, Pandit Samata Prasad, Sri Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Pandit Birju Maharaj etc. In Sri Bhaini Sahib itself *Namdhari Kala Kendra* was established. Sri Satguru Ji is master of masters. He composed 14.25, 14.75, 16.5 and other difficult tunes and *tals* and guided all to practice singing of compositions. Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji Memorial Sangeet Sammelans (music concerts) were organised in Delhi, Mumbai, Aurangabad, Lucnow in which prominent musicians and artists participated. Chief Minister of UP Ram Naresh Yadav inaugurated the Sangeet Sammelan at Ravinderlay Hall, Lucknow held from 2-6 February 1979.

In 1978 foundation stone of World International Peace Conference Hall was laid by the auspicious hands of Sri Satguru Ji at Bangkok. Heads of different religions of world participated in it. By writing a letter Sri Satguru Ji praised the monastery of Dr Suchat, a symbol of Thailand World Peace, Vegetarianism and meditation.

In a time span of about 20 years, following the guidance and blessings by Satguru Ji, Namdhari Sikhs organised the community for its preaching and expansion they earned their recognition in the new fields, new regions and opened new horizons to develop further.

MEETING NEW CHALLENGES

The Namdhari Sikhs started expanding their identity in different countries of the world. They elevated themselves in the political arena along with other fields. In India they were close to Congress because of old and proximate association in the political perspective. That's why they started playing an active role abroad in Overseas Congress too.

Back home in 1977, Congress had a severe blow when it lost elections of Lok Sabha. Many associated with it for long time backed out. Sri Satguru Ji cheered up them that those good days would come again and remained associated with Congress led by Smt. Indira Gandhi. With Congress returning to power again in 1980, Prime Minister considered it right to be in closer ties with Namdhari Sikhs who stood by her in difficult times. In 1980 Congress elected Shri Harvendra Singh Hanspal, General Secretary Namdhari Darbar to Rajya Sabha from Punjab. Although there were Namdhari members in Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, Vidhan Parishad earlier too, but Harvendra Singh Hanspal directly represented Sri Satguru Ji and Namdhari Panth. In 1981, he represented the nation in United Nations Organisation with other MPs and participated in all issues strategically. In Namdhari attire, he gave a distinct identity about himself.

In political field Kartar Singh Sokhi used to win elections in Delhi by the grace of Sri Satguru Ji. Sant Pritam Singh made his identity felt in Jammu, who completed his life journey on 9 Sep 1977. S Sulkhan Singh

continued to be a member of Metropolitan Council and President of Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee. Prof Inder Singh became active in Bihar, and became minister and then Speaker of Legislative Assembly of Jharkhand. In the Panchayats of Haryana and Punjab Namdhari Sikhs became *Panchs* and *Sarpanchs*, and also became Chairmen of Block *Samitis*. With the blessings of Sri Satguru Ji a marvellous function was arranged. Namdhari Darbar, Sri Bhaini Sahib (Punjab) organised a reception in honour of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 27 March 1981 at Vigyan Bhawan New Delhi. Namdhari representatives from UK, Thailand, Kenya, USA alongwith other prominent figures participated in the reception. Sri Satguru Ji blessed her. Smt Gandhi said that discipline, patriotism, fight against social evils, respecting women, shunning dowry should be learnt from Namdhari Sikhs who believe in simple living, high thinking and are active since 1857.

To encourage women in the activities of *Panth*, *Istari Vidyak Jatha* was constituted in 1981 with the blessings of Sri Satguru Ji.

Alongwith other business fields, the Namdhari Sikhs started extending their expertise beyond Punjab and Haryana in the field of agriculture. In Haryana, the land which was considered arid and desert, they developed orchards besides cultivation of wheat, cotton, paddy, sugarcane etc. In these orchards not only were *Jujuba trees (berian)* but orange, Kinu trees and grapes plants gave enough fruit that started to be worth the effort. Earlier this area was connected to Sirsa city by pathways along canals, country side pathways etc. now has been connected by metallic roads. A net of roads spread out even in villages In which the guidance of Sri Satguru Ji had lion's share.

The agriculturists bought land in the area of Gola Gokaranath in UP. With meditation, *Maryada* and glorious history besides organisation and strength to layman, great congregation of Hola Mahalla 1982 was held at Gola Gokarannath. It had good impact.

In the same year special efforts were made to develop farm near Bangalore (Karnataka). Sri Satguru Ji handed over the management of this farm to Sri Uday Singh Ji. This farm of village Birdi was of 180 acre. With permission of Sri Satguru Ji, Thakar Ji planted mangoes in 40 acres, coconut in 40 acres, grapes and plants of other fruits and flowers in 5 acres. Sri Satguru Ji's teachings were to work hard; speak truth, be honest, help the weak and poor, wherever you live keep on doing something for poor and down trodden people of that area. Hard work with this advice as guiding principle proved fruitful.

In 1985 this farm was named as Namdhari seeds. To push up the production of this farm to business level US, Europe, Asia, were toured. Outside India, branch offices were opened in America and Europe continents and in Japan, Thailand, Bangladesh, Jordan, Egypt too. The work to improve had standard and variety of plants, seeds, seedlings, fruits, flowers etc had begun. Sweet Tamarind, citron, grapes etc plants and seeds were brought from abroad and made productive further. Namdhari seeds have brought name and fame in India and abroad by its products.

In the field of education, Guru Hari Singh college in Sri Jeevan Nagar, Satguru Partap Singh Academy in Sri Bhaini Sahib, Shaheed Bishan Singh Memorial School in Delhi, educational institutes of Mandi (Himachal Pradesh) and Sirsa (Haryana) earned their recognition; and contributed towards education revolution to keep pace with time. The actions taken in this context in Bihar had already been mentioned.

In the field of literature 3rd World Punjabi Conference was held in Bangkok in 1983. Men of letters came to participate from all over the world, They had serious discussions regarding problems of Punjabi, They praised the hospitality and support provided by Namdhari Sikhs and expressed gratitude towards the leader of the Panth, Sri Satguru Ji.

From time to time Sri Satguru Ji blessed reputed Punjabi authors Tara Singh Kamil, Navtej Singh, Santokh Singh Dhir, Kirpal Singh Kasel, Dr Harbhajan Singh, and Sant Singh Sekhon, Dr. Maheep Singh, Harbhajan Singh Rattan etc.

Alongwith the mouth piece of Namdhari Panth, Satjug, Wariam, Nirikhiak, Yug Maryada and Vartmaan Hindustan had already started contributing as per their capability. For research of Namdhari history Jaswinder Singh had resigned from government job in 1984 and was given the responsibility by Sri Satguru Ji to research thoroughly into the old government files. He is continuously in touch with National Archives.

To present huge congregation of Namdhari Sikhs in foreign land, Hola Mohalla - 1984 was held at Birmingham (UK). Besides local Sangat, the Sangat from US, Canada, Germany, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Thailand, India and other countries participated in it in large numbers with great enthusiasm. The *Rahit Maryada* of Namdhari Panth was preached further.

To enhance the spiritual power, *Naam Simran* and meditation are stressed in *Maryada*. Towards which *Jap Prayog* is organised for a month every year. By postponing all tours and staying at the same place for the whole month, Sri Satguru Ji preaches the way to do *Naam Simran*. To preach this meditation, way of living, he organised the Hola of 1985 in Daraslam (Tanzania). That's

why the Sikhs of nearby countries, who could not afford to come to India often, got a chance to participate in it; and local Sikhs got a chance to express their ability towards *sewa* and service and to the management.

In 1986, not only for a month rather Sri Satguru Ji organised *Jap Prayog* for the entire year. In which thousands of Sikhs did meditation (*Simran*) for hundreds of thousands of hours with the *Rahit Maryada* of righteousness and virtuousness, purity and cleanliness. Scripture reading and flow of religious discourses were continued as per programme schedules. Such exercise was meant for improvising corrections and meanings of the text. For some seasons Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji arranged 600,000 Path -reading of Sri Adi Granth Sahib. As per wishes of Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji, 1,25,000 Paths and their ceremonial closing were done by the *sangat* twice and started afresh.

Namdhari musicians, children and* artists performed *kirtan* with wired instruments as per tunes mentioned in the scriptures and pure classical music. This practice still continues.

The ideal of *Rahit Maryada* of Sikhism was fully followed by Sri Satguru Ji during his bypass surgery. According to this *Rahit Maryada* not a hair of body was to be cut. Medicines having a compound of liquor, were prohibited. Blood transfusion of any other person was not appropriate. For purity of feelings women nurse must not be there. Head must not be uncovered, turban must be always on it. By agreeing to his above mentioned conditions, Dr I K Ross of Royal Adelaide Hospital, Australia operated on, 16 July 1991. Besides Guru family and followers, here Dr Narinderpal Singh of Thailand was present in his service as and when needed. Operation was successful. Soon he started blessing *Sadh Sangat*. It

was considered that sort of instance to happen at an age of 71 years was a marvel of his spiritual power. During these days, Namdhari Sikhs of entire world meditated on *naam* and offered prayers (Ardas) for his early and quick recovery.

The year 1990-91 was birth centenary of Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji. A committee was constituted. Although it was celebrated in the entire Namdhari world with respect and faith; by organising programmes at different places, information about Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji's life was imparted. *Diwans* were organised, *Katha-kirtan* were performed, *Naam Simran* was organised and ceremonial closing of scriptures was done. The main convention was held at Delhi in the form of a symposium. This convention was commemorated at FICCI auditorium, Delhi in 1991 under the auspicious guidance of Sri Satguru Ji. Dr S. D. Sharma, Vice-President was the chief guest. Prominent writers read papers and discussions on Sri Satguru Ji's life took place. This year many literary and poetic books about Sri Satguru Ji were published and released.

In 1992 Namdhari hockey eleven was at its peak. Wherever it played it would win cups and shields. The splendour increased further by winning Sanjay Gandhi Hockey Tournament this year. To encourage sports, Namdhari Sports Academy at Sri Bhaini Sahib was established. Sri Satguru Ji laid foundation stone of a stadium in Sri Bhaini Sahib on 8th November 1992. It is ready after construction. Besides hockey, players and athletes avail facilities for badminton, athletics etc. Astroturf and modern gymnasium have been built up and developed. Namdhari children are bringing name and fame in wrestling and body building also.

On 4-7 November 1991 at Sri Bhaini Sahib, directions for *Gurmat* preaching were imparted. These conventions

were organised in coming years 93, 94, 96 too. Attendance and discussion in these symbolised enthusiasm.

Namdhari seeds Pvt Ltd Karnataka started publishing Namdhari Samachar – English quarterly in 1992. Through it they shared their achievements, production, activities throughout the world; and Namdharism was propagated with it. Similar job is being done by Namdhari Panth mouthpiece *Satjug*. Earlier this paper used to be published from Sri Jeevan Nagar (Haryana) on an ordinary press on simple paper by hand composing. Since 3rd December 1992 this weekly started being published from Delhi. Its paper is better, computer setting and printing is done on offset press. This was appreciated and welcomed by readers then subsequently its readership increased four fold. It was placed directly under Namdhari Darbar. Every year, coloured issues along with coloured photos, annual special issues enabled it to be presentable to other readers too. Prominent writers of Punjabi literary world started feeling proud by contributing in its publishing work. This is not a business paper rather it is solid mouthpiece of *Panth*, because no advertisements were ever published in it. With the help of this entire *Panth* began to maintain its association by the grace of Sri Satguru Ji. It's most popular sections are Amrit Bachan of Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji and pious preachings of Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji. The detailed reports of tours of His Holiness are regularly published in it. His Holiness tours everywhere for the betterment of *Sadh Sangat*. Such lengthy tours as on 21 February 1993 for about 2 months; covered an air journey of 66000 miles. blessed the land of UK, USA, Canada, Germany, Denmark, Scotland.

This year on Hola, Sri Satguru Ji bestowed the title of

Panth Bhushan to Sh. Harvendra Singh Hanspal, General Secretary Namdhari Darbar. In the 4th World Punjabi Conference held at Delhi on 9th April 1994, Master Nihal Singh President Namdhari Darbar was honoured for his service towards Punjabi language and literature.

Although Namdhari Sikhs sacrificed their lives in 1871-72, for the cause of downtrodden and for the independence of country, yet land allotment for their memorials continued to elude even after independence. It was a different matter that Namdhari Sikhs had always kept the memories of martyrs alive.

According to Sri Satguru Ji, sometimes, the government too earns applause of the people when it undertakes good projects. The beginning to build these memorials was started in 1993. Prior to that Kuka Shaheed Memorial Trust, under the presidency of its chairman S Beant Singh Chief Minister Punjab made a success in terms of removing obstructions for building memorials. 6 acre land was bought and 6.4 acre land was leased for memorial at Jamalpur, Malerkotla. 3802 yards for Ludhiana memorial and 1 *kanal* 14 *Marle* land for Amritsar memorial were acquired. In the convention held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister S Beant Singh, Sri Satguru Ji laid foundation stone of Shaheedi Samarak on 24 June 1993 at Malerkotla. Over 50,000 Namdhari Sikhs from all over the world participated in this convention. In this huge gathering, Sri Satguru Ji's followers maintained complete discipline, for which they were applauded.

28th convention of *Vidyak Jatha* was held at Birdi (Karnatka) in 1993; in it, gratitude was expressed to S Beant Singh for his special efforts towards the development of memorials. In this convention, blessings (*Ashirwad*) reward was conferred by Sri Satguru Ji to its

former President S. Jagdish Singh Wariam for his tireless services.

Master Nihal Singh, Sant Ananta Singh, Suba Ganda Singh, Sant Wariam Singh Musawar had already been bestowed upon honours of *Panth Ratans*. *Gian Martand* was conferred for Pt Gopal Singh and *Kav Bhushan* on Kavishar Jeevan Singh; Sant Mangal Singh was titled *Nishkam Sewak*. Among those working for Vidyak Jatha Sant Surinder Singh, Sant Dalip Singh, and Sant Surjeet Singh Jeet (UK) were bestowed with 'Blessings reward'.

Women were conferred Sethani Mahinder Kaur Award. Jagdish Singh, Kirpal Singh Kasel, Atma Singh Sankhatra, Bishan Singh and some other writers got privilege of having Taran Singh Vahimi Award for many years continuously.

A convention of Vidyak Jatha had already been held in Bangkok on 19-20 March 1993. In which the information about the development of martyr memorials was also provided with.

Alongwith this glorious convention was held near old prison on 26 November 1993 to build martyr memorial at Ludhiana, the chairmanship was shouldered by S Beant Singh. Although these memorials were being developed by the government, still having emotional attachment Namdhari Sikhs thought it privileged to contribute towards building of these memorials. To bring the few eminent personalities of Namdhari history to the notice of common man special efforts were made; roads and parks were named after them. For example, a south side road of Rashtrapati Bhawan was named as Mai (Suba) Hukmi Marg, road leading to Zakhira from Mayapuri in Delhi was named Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji Marg, Road leading to Sri Bhaini Sahib from Ludhiana-Samrala crossing is Satguru Ram Singh Marg, Satguru Ram Singh Marg in

Yamuna Nagar, Satguru Partap Singh chowk in Ludhiana, Ludhiana-Malerkotla-Khanna road is named Namdhari Shaheedi Marg, Road leading to Ludhiana Shaheedi Samarak named Kuka Shaheedi Marg and Malerkotla Namdhari Shaheed Girls College etc.

On 3-6 February 1994 the spiritual leader of Radhaswami sect Maharaj Rajinder Singh Ji organised 7th World Religious Conference in which Budhist head Dalai Lama, Jain Acharya Sushil Muni, Maulana Ji and Father of Church participated. By agreeing to the request of organisers Sri Satguru Ji graced the occasion by his presence; and guided man to righteous track.

Similarly on 20 November 1994 Sri Satguru Ji came especially from Bangkok for the religious felicitation of Acharya Sri Padam Sagar Surishwarji. In Bangkok, Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Major General Chamlong sought the blessings of Sri Satguru Ji. He appraised the role of righteous Namdhari Sikhs of Thailand.

That Sri Satguru Ji undertakes extensive tours for the spiritual guidance of the Namdhari Sikhs can be gauged from the statistics of annual calender year of 1994. The statistics are as follow :

By train	632 Km
By Car	48956 Km
By air	69683Km
Total	119271 Km

(This data is provided by Sewak Rachhpal Singh)

In the World Sikh Convention, on 25 September 1995, 11 Namdhari Sikhs were honoured by S. Gurcharan Singh Tohra, President of Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee Amritsar (Punjab). Among these were the descendents of martyr families, Subas, Journalists,

teachers and preachers. In this gathering Singh Sahib Yogi Harbhajan Singh Khalsa who came from USA, praised the sacrifices and spirit of Sikhism of Namdhari Sikhs. He was an admirer of Sri Satguru Ji.

This association with committee was further strengthened, when in 1996, S. Jasvinder Singh, a scholar in Namdhari history was nominated as the member of Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee. He has visited Myanmar (Burma) many a times with permission of Sri Satguru Ji and collected information about the detention places of Sri Satguru Ram Singh and Subas in Myanmar. On the basis of these in June 2000, a group of scholars, namely S. Jasvinder Singh, S. Surjeet Singh Jeet and Prof. Tara Singh Anjan, led by Surinder Singh Namdhari and Ajit Singh Namdhari visited Myanmar and discussed the matter with the Govt. officials and Indian embassy representatives.

The establishment of Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji Chair in Sampooranand Sanskrit Vishwavidyala Varanasi (UP) in 1996 was an leap forward in academies. In 1997 in the presence of Sri Satguru Ji, over 200 scholars of Vedic tradition participated in the Guru Eulogy.

On 19-21 July-1997, World Punjabi Conference was held at Wisconsin University, Milwaukee (USA), which was inaugurated by Sri Satguru Ji. He said, "All should come after daily praying for the success of the conference." There, Sri Satguru Ji visited the home of Ustad Vilayat Ali Khan. For Ustad Vilayat Khan this was special occassion.

From there he reached UK, on 28 July on the invitation of Lord Swaraj Paul, he visited House of Lords. Great honour and welcome was given at the main office of British Parliament. After that he went to see Parliament session. It was the same parliament which had endorsed the exile of Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji.

During this tour, his reception at Swami Narayan Temple on 3 August was quite significant. This temple is the specimen of Indian Building architecture. It is made of 4828 tons of marble. A red carpet welcome was accorded to Satguru Ji. The *mahant* of the temple Swami Atam Swaroop said that the complete pilgrimage had blessed this place to our good luck, we were blessed. This temple is of an organization of Gujarat who are followers of embodied Guru Pramukh Swami Ji.

The Namdhari Sikhs of Thailand have put in efforts to build their own school by having permission from education department of Thailand government. Sri Satguru Ji inaugurated this school on 24 August 1997. It was named Modern International School, Bangkok. It is affiliated to London University. Besides other subjects, Punjabi is also taught here.

Third centenary of Khalsa was celebrated throughout the year 1999. For its celebrations, a *Chetna March* was organised on 28 March 1999 from Sri Bhaini Sahib to Sri Anandpur Sahib by Namdhari Sant Khalsa under the leadership of Sri Satguru Ji. There were about 1000 motorcycles, scooters, Cars, Trucks, Tractors and buses etc. This caravan was 35 km long and 125 welcome gates were erected enroute, throughout the entire journey. Sangat from villages and cities stood by the sides of roads to welcome the procession.

Chief Minister of Punjab, S.Prakash Singh Badal with associates was present at Anadpur Sahib to greet the Namdhari procession. On reaching Takhat Sri Kesgarh Sahib, Head Granthi Giani Tarlochan Singh presented a *Siropa* (robe of Honour) to Sri Satguru Ji.

In the same year the Namdhari Sikhs participated in the *Kar-sewa* of Durgiana Temple under auspicious guidance of Sri Satguru Ji. Besides, Sri Satguru Ji visited

Bangkok to inaugurate 33rd World Vegetarian Conference.

Establishment of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh Chair in Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar was another landmark. Prof Satinder Singh was appointed its first head.

The Council for Parliament of World Religions was held at Cape Town (South Africa). From 1 to 8 December 1999 in which 40 meetings were organised daily to enable different religious institutes to represent their faith. The Namdhari Sikhs reached there to participate under the chairmanship of Shri Harvendra Singh Hanspal, President and Jagdish Singh Waryam, General Secretary Namdhari Darbar. Suba Satnam Singh from Kenya and President of Namdhari Sangat Satwant Singh Palrey from Tanzania had already reached there along with their companions for making advance arrangements. Participation of Namdhari Panth was appreciated.

In 2000, from 28-31 August a Millennium World Peace Summit of religious and spiritual leaders was held by World Council of Religious leaders at UN assembly hall, New York. The Namdhari Sikhs participated in this summit under the guidance of Sri Satguru Ji. In which he stated that the key to World Peace was animal protection; for which vegetarianism had to be adopted. He spoke in Punjabi in assembly hall. Surinder Singh Manchanda, as desired by this Holiness, met summit General Secretary and apprised of the salient features of Namdhari Sikhs and their role for world peace and harmony. To carry on with this chain, the council's founding meeting was scheduled at Bangkok (Thailand) from 12-14 June 2002. In which Shri Harvendra Singh Hanspal and Prof. Tara Singh Anjan participated on behalf of Namdhari Panth. Local Sangat gave outstanding support. This was another successful international religious gathering.

The Namdhari Sikhs have projected their identity by

establishing their own religious centres, colleges, schools, farms, business institutes at other places on one hand and on the other hand they have changed the face of their main religious centre, Sri Bhaini Sahib. Earlier there were *Kacha* houses. Now every building is built of concrete. The water of *Sarovar* is as deep as from natural source. Large *Diwan* and *Langar* halls have been constructed. *Krantikri Mandir* has been rebuilt. Old age home and hospitals have also been constructed.

However along with it Sikhism is strengthened. A continuous *Varni* of *Bhajan* is going on there. Outside Sri Bhaini Sahib there are 19 places in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, UP, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Bihar, Jharkhand, Delhi and abroad Bangkok (Thailand) where continuous *varni* is going on.

In Ludhiana, under the supervision of Thakur Uday Singh, an eight storied Satguru Partap Singh Apollo Hospital with modern amenities has been constructed.

The Namdhari Sikhs have made advances in the political field too. Important among them are Shri Harvinder Singh Hanspal, President of Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee and Prof Inder Singh, Speaker of Jharkhand Assembly.

Presenter of *Panthic* activities within the literary and historical writings, the weekly *Satjug* came out with special issues related to: Khalsa tri-centenary in 1999, 40 years of Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji on *Gurgaddi* in 2000, 80 years of *Satjug* in 2001, Historical material in 2002, Namdhari writers special issue in 2003, Historical Centenaries in 2004 *Gurgaddi* Centenary issue in 2006. These issues are usually released at the *Hola Mohalla*.

Significant advancement has been made in the field of publication of Namdhari history and literature. Over 100

years old Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji's *Hukumname* and Sant Santokh Singh's *Satguru Bilas* were standardised and published by the Namdhari Darbar. The task of editing and compiling was done by Jaswinder Singh. Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji's discourses "Lal Eh Ratan" and discourses of Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji "*Pravachan*" were published with the efforts of Bibi Beant Kaur and Shri Harvendra Singh Hanspal. Writings of many other writers have been published. For special contribution in the field of literature, Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji blessed Shri Pritam Singh Kavi by conferring on him the titles of *Sahit Ratan* in 2001 and Amar Bharti by conferring on him *Sahit Martand* in 2004.

Briefly speaking the Namdhari Sikhs under the guidance of their spiritual master have made a mark in the field of sports, academics, devotional music and spiritual quest. Their contribution in the national struggle has already been recognised and appreciated.

RELEVANCE OF NAMDHARI SIKH PRINCIPLES

The concept of *Naam* is central to the construct of Namdhari *Maryada*. It implies the worship of Almighty God alone. Meditation on the *naam* leads to spiritual contentment as it liberates the human being from the greed of material comforts. Millions of people take to false means of contentment and happiness, they take narcotics and intoxicants. They approach God-men and women popularly known as Mahatamas, Swamis, Bapus, Babas, Guru Matas, Sants and Sages etc. They also listen to the discourses of these personnel. But without the meditation of *naam* all other means are false.

You cannot have *naam* on your own. This is *Gurmantar*, *Mantar* is received from Guru and is obtained from Him only. There cannot be second thought about Guru. One can not acquire *naam* on its own. It is *gurmantar*-a *mantar* given by Guru. The later is manifestation of Al mighty Himself. Since The *Bani* is revealed through Guru, therefore, he knows Almighty personally. Almighty and Guru are the two sides of the same coin. (Gur Rasna Amrit Boldi Hari Naam Suhavi).

The tradition of living Guru in Sikh Panth was set forth by Guru Nanak Dev Ji himself and was continued by his successors even when the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev Ji compiled Sri Adi Granth Sahib. Rest of five successors occupied the status of embodied Guru. The importance of Sikh Guru can be gauged from the fact that where the

Sikh Gurus visited the places, gurdwaras have been built up in their memory. They are historically important because of the personal visit of the embodied Guru. There is ample evidence of *Bani* purporting embodied Guru. However, there is a major section of the Sikhs who believe in concept of "*Shabad Guru, Bani Guru*." but still they bow before the Saints and *babas*.

The relevance of Namdhari *maryada* is that the Namdhari Sikhs believe in living Guru and address him as Satguru. Present Satguru Jagjit Singh exhorts the Namdhari Sikhs to lead life according to *gurbani*. Historical places have importance for Sikhs. For Namdhari Sikhs- Raiyan, Sri Bhaini Sahib, Amritsar, Raikot, Malerkotla, Sri Jeevan Nagar etc are also places of importance. However for them the most important place is where Sri Satguru Ji is present. A glimpse of Guru is pilgrimage for them. Relevance of guide is ever lasting. There is no substitute of his guidance.

The Namdhari Sikhs follow that *Rahit Maryada* which is evolved by Satguru. This *maryada* is important in their daily life as it makes their lives comfortable.

In the Sikh world today, the emphasis is to make Sikhs Amritdhari. The Namdhari sikhs have made this *maryada* a part of their lives. Each and every Namdhari Sikh is Amritdhari. Not only for men, the *Amrit* is mandatory for women also. On the ceremony of resuming the household work after delivery, *amrit* is administered to women, along with newborn baby. Before that *Amrit* is administered to the couple at the time of marriage. Those who are to be administered *Amrit*, must keep 5 Kakars. (*Kesh, Kangha, Kara, Kirpan and kachhehra*).

Namdhari *Maryada* emphasises on the cleanliness and purity; they take bath from head to toe; using water

gathered from natural sources. Keeping *gadwa* of water (iron ressal) is a symbol of true Namdhari Sikh. Its modern substitution for others is bottled water. Emphasis is just on drinking clean water.

Being the true adherents of *Gurmat*, Namdhari Sikhs are vegetarians and take intoxicant free food. They always remember a verse of Kabir who says that both *Jhatka* and *halal* are bad for they destroy piety in human being. Scientifically too, eating meat exposes the human beings to the diseases from which the animals suffer.

Moreover, ecological balance of nature is disturbed by animal slaughtering. Consequently some species are on the verge of extinction and some have already become extinct. Above all, the researchers of health sciences have mentioned that vegetarian food is better than non-vegetarian, beneficial for health, cheaper and free from diseases. That's why people, even in western countries, are returning to vegetarianism.

Intoxicants are not permitted by any religion because their use develop physical and mental weakness. Every intoxicant – poppy, bhang, opium, liquor, charas, ganja, hashish, smack, brown-sugar etc. harms the human body. Intoxicants have hit the families financially and resulted into social tension. They make people addicts and vicious. To keep away from these intoxicants, anti-intoxicant campaigns are in progress. The government has opened departments for de-addiction.

Virtuous conduct and values emphasised by the Namdhari *Maryada* greatly help the people to contain lust, anger, greed, and ego and lead simple life. Similarly, emphasis of this *Maryada* on morality saves people from being infected by the diseases like AIDS.

The Namdhari Sikhs are sticking to the principles of

respecting women, her education, and save her away from the yoke of dowry. They don't indulge in foeticide. Now this has become the need of hour. Today, a baby girl is killed not immediately after birth, but even before birth (female foeticide) by abortion. Subsequently, sex ratio has become uneven. So to stop it, laws are being made. Social awareness is being developed. That's how Namdhari principles are becoming relevant for launching a movement against this inhuman practice.

Relatively speaking, the process of disintegration of joint-families and neglect of elders in the family is negligible in the Namdhari community. The Namdhari youth is oriented in the tradition of caring and tendering the elders. Moreover, Satguru Ji, being their spiritual guide and social perceptor, tries to maintain the cohesion of the family unit. He also tries to prevail upon Non-resident Indian Namdhari Sikhs to remain attached with their elders and roots in India.

The relevance of Namdhari attire is their distinct identity. Their white clothes and straight turban symbolises high morals truth and purity - a virtuous life free from fraud, deceit, cheating and lying.

The Namdhari Sikhs are taught to respect and honour 'others'. They are also taught to care for animals. Above all, they are taught by their Satguru to oppose terrorism in any form and stand for world peace. The Namdhari *Maryada* and traditions are relevant for the world.



No Indian can deny the importance of efforts put in by Satguru Ram Singh and his followers, sixty years ago for achieving the freedom of the country. Congress merely followed the path shown by them.

- Pandit Jawaharlal
Nehru 17-2-1939

The banner for freedom given to Indians by Satguru Ram Singh and the sacrifices of the Namdhari Sikhs is a matter of great pride.

- Neta Ji
Subhash chandra Bose

The first Indian (Guru Ram Singh) to use non-cooperation and boycott of British as a political weapon.

- The Encyclopaedia
Britannica

When first heard of him, as a successor of Balak Ram (Guru Balak Singh) of Hazroo, he was known as Ram Singh Mahant, afterward as Guru Ram Singh and then as Satguru Ram Singh and now as Satguru Badshah.

- Lt. Col Mc Andrew-
DIG Ambala Circle

